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[AN INTRODUCTION.]

## FATE.

By the Author of "Nickelboy's Christmas-Box,"  
"Maurice Durant," etc., etc.

### CHAPTER XIX.

The idea of her life shall sweetly creep  
Into his study of imagination. *Shakespeare.*

Though, as Sir Ralph and that admirable governess Miss Lucas had declared, there was positively nothing in Mr. Clarence Clifford's conduct or bearing to take offence at, still for some reason, unexplainable perhaps to herself even, Miss Lillian Melville was irritated, annoyed, piqued by the over patience and stone-like immovability of her tutor.

"What is he, flesh and blood?" she asked herself, as she stood before her mirror in her dressing-room during the last few moments before retiring to her bed-chamber adjoining. "Kate is bad enough, but one can endure her, she is a woman, but a man to treat one like a child! It is unendurable."

But her pout suddenly changed to a kindlier and more gentle expression.

"Perhaps, poor fellow, he has had some great trouble, something that has changed him from a light-hearted youth to the still, grave and stern man he is. He—he is very handsome," she continued, musingly, glancing at her own face at the moment. "Perhaps some love affair—But there, papa would be shocked, and with reason, if he could see me conjecturing at the why and wherefore of Mr. Clifford's gravity. But still I am half inclined to put it down to an affaire de la cour."

With which conclusion the lovely girl retired to sleep, and dream, much to her annoyance, of the dark, mournful face and grave, musical voice she had been musing over.

It was a singular dream.

She fancied that by some ill fate or other she was cast out to walk through the darkness of a cold, dreary night with nothing to help or guide her but a small twinkling, star-like lamp. She dreamt that she had toiled on along the top of a huge hill, seeking

vainly for succour, hoping against hope for light, when a voice, sounding deep, deep below her, called her name:

"Lily! Lily! Lily!" thrice.

She looked down into a deep abyss and by the light of her tiny lamp saw a dark figure, a man's form, whence the voice came again, calling:

"Hold up the lamp, my star, I come!"

She fancied she held the lamp above her head, still looking down, and waited.

The figure struggled and fought his way up a tangled, rock-strewn path, she watching him all the while with anxious, beating heart, and that at last he came up and clasped her to his breast.

The lamp grew from a star into a beautiful light-giving moon, and bathed in its rays and the happiness of that embrace she looked up and saw the face above her was—the tutor's!

She awoke and was very much annoyed, and womanlike vented her annoyance upon Mr. Clifford.

He was waiting in the library as usual that morning, the Italian books at his elbow and his pen in his hand.

She kept him waiting a quarter of an hour, and when she entered was engaged in an interesting conversation with Miss Lucas, which she carried on, as if entirely oblivious of any one else's presence, for another five minutes.

Then, as if the fact of his standing waiting for her morning salutation had suddenly occurred to her, she turned, sank into a chair opposite his and with the most nonchalant of nods said:

"Good morning, Mr. Clifford. (So you think that rose is the prettier of the two, Kate? Well, I will tell John to buy it.) You are tired of waiting, I have no doubt, but I have been—let me see, the grammar first this morning, is it not?"

And without waiting for an answer opened her book and set to work.

His grave, handsome face was quite unmoved, his eyes showed no surprise at her unusual brusqueness—unusual, for she was generally gently polite—and in his ordinary earnest way he commenced the lesson.

She was not only careless but irritable, contradicted

him on several occasions, always wrongly, said Italian was not half so musical as she had expected, that the grammar was a ridiculous one and the exercises stupid!

He raised his eyes at the summary of ills and said, in his low, musical voice:

"Italian is the most musical language on earth, this grammar is the best arranged and the most lucid, these exercises are all that could be desired; Miss Melville, the fault, if any, lies with me; I fear I make but an indifferent teacher."

His tone was so sad in its dignified gravity that a flood of repentance swept all the caprice from Lillian's heart in a moment.

"No!" she said, flushing a bright crimson that made her look more like an English rose than a lily. "Do not say that. You know it is not true. The books are all right, and so is the Italian, and you try to and would teach me if I could learn. It is I who am stupid, ignorant, and ill-natured."

And with that declamation, uttered in an uncontradictable tone, she took up the book again, and, as was to be expected, finished her task properly.

His look showed no elation as he put the books together, rose, and opened the door; and Lillian's pride, haughtiness, caprice—call it what you will—sprang to the surface again. With an icy "Good morning!" she swept past him.

Miss Lucas followed, and Mr. Clifford closed the door, nearly stumbling over Don, who lay there waiting for him.

He stopped to pat him, and Lillian, looking back at the moment, called the dog:

"Don! come here!"

But Don would not turn his head, and still gazed straight up to his new friend with great, staring, honest eyes.

Miss Lillian was very fond of her dog, and very jealous of his attachment for this tutor of hers. The tears actually sprang to her eyes as she saw that her favourite had gone over to the enemy, as at that moment in her heart she dubbed Mr. Clifford.

"Don! Don!—come here, sir!"

Still the dog did not move, and Mr. Clifford, looking up with something like the shadow of a smile upon his lips, said:

"Go, Don—go, sir."

The dog rose instantly, and leisurely walked towards his mistress.

Mr. Clifford ascended the stairs, but before he had reached the corridor he heard Miss Melville's voice speaking coldly to one of the men-servants.

"James, tie Don up to his kennel. He is not to be trusted."

A contraction almost of pain swept over the tutor's face, and his lips grew more compressed and stern.

"Capricious, wantonly cruel, proud, haughty, and yet so beautiful—so beautiful!" he murmured, closing the door of his room and sinking on to the sofa, "and yet so beautiful!"

He ate his solitary dinner, a frugal one by his express wish—he had not been used to expensive luxuries he had told Mrs. Williams—and then went for a stroll in the park.

Along the side of the river to a deep, thick copse of fir and beech was his favourite walk, and thither, book in hand, he proceeded leisurely.

The children of the lodges and the farms ran out as usual to get his kindly nod and pleasant smile, and the mothers courtesied from the open doors at the foreign gentleman who was so pleasant spoken. Notwithstanding his gravity he was a favourite with all save Miss Melville.

He stood looking at the river several times during the walk, thinking, in his downcast, mournful way, and looking dreamily at it as it wended down towards the sea as if it bore something of his own life upon its bosom. Then he resumed his book, and, reading and walking, reached the wood.

A little open glen of only a few feet, with some thick-growing moss and a fallen tree, was his destination. Here on this unfrequented spot he threw himself on the grass, took the fallen trunk as a pillow, and fell to reading. But his thoughts were more interesting or dominant than his subject, for after a while the book was lowered and he fell to thinking.

A footstep roused him. He knew to whom it belonged.

He sprang to his feet quietly, and, pushing Don down, raised his hat.

Lilian bowed, looking round as if in search of some one.

"Have you seen Miss Lucas, Mr. Clifford?" she asked.

"No," he said. "Did you expect to meet her here?"

"Well, not on this exact spot, but somewhere near. She stayed behind to get her embroidery, and arranged to walk across the park and meet me. I have been looking for her for the last quarter of an hour, and am quite tired." And with a half-laugh she lifted her hat and shook with one shake her glorious hair from off her brow.

Mr. Clifford had waved his hand to the old trunk.

"Here is a good seat," he said. "Will you not sit down?"

She hesitated for half a moment, just long enough for him to notice it, and then crossed over and sat down.

If she thought or feared that he would remain with her tête-à-tête she was disappointed.

"While you are resting," he said, picking up his book, "I will try and find Miss Lucas."

She rose immediately.

"No," she said, "I will not allow that. That would be driving you from your seat."

"I shall not mind that," he said, quietly. "I will send Miss Lucas here to you."

"No," she said; "stay, if you please, or I will go and find her myself. I could not think of disturbing you."

The tone more than the words was too much of a command for him to disobey, and with a slight bow he resumed his seat and his book.

"What are you reading?" asked Lilian, after remaining silent for nearly three minutes, and driven to desperation by the set calm of his downcast face.

"A volume of poems," he said, closing the volume over his thumb.

"Whose?" she asked.

"One Carloine Vernet's," he replied.

"I don't know them," she said. "Are they in English?"

"No; in Italian," he said.

"And are they good?"

"Beautiful—very beautiful!"

She looked wistfully at the book.

"How I should like to read them. Your tone makes me curious. Who was he?"

"No one knows," replied the tutor; "his name was but a borrowed one. Whence he came, where he died, are mysteries."

There was a touch of bitterness that did not escape the quick ears of the beautiful listener.

"You make me more curious still," she said. "Will you read me a verse?"

He hesitated for a moment as she had hesitated when he had asked her to sit down, then in his grave voice read her a verse.

"How sweet it sounds," she said. "I wish I could understand. Do you know I feel certain, although I know nothing yet of Italian, that you read it to the manner born? Can you not translate it for me?"

He shook his head with a slight smile.

"It is untranslatable," he said.

"Love came hand in hand with Hope, apace,  
To whisper to the sick man's heart;  
Sweeter than the myrtle was Love's face,  
But Hope and he are long since part."

"You have spoilt it," she said, shaking her head.

"I know it," he replied. "It is music in Italian—rough, wild discord in English."

There was a moment's pause, and he had almost opened his book when Lilian spoke again.

"Are you an Italian, Mr. Clifford?" she asked.

He looked at her earnestly for a moment and she thought that a slight flush had stained his dark face.

"No," he said, "I think not."

"You think not!" she repeated, opening her innocent, childlike eyes to their fullest extent. "Do you not know?"

"No, Miss Melville," he said, and something in his voice made her afraid to push her inquiry farther.

"You are fond of reading. I have thought you might be dull all alone in those grim rooms of yours. Pray do you dislike society?"

"No," he said, "but society must dislike me. We have nothing in common, Miss Melville. I am too used to solitude to feel happy in the exchange of the drawing-room civilities and—"

"Falsehoods," she said, interrupting him, with a smile.

"No," he said, "I did not say that."

"You would find us—papa and ourselves, I mean—almost as good as solitude; we are very quiet," she added, with a slight hesitation. "I am sure you are dull upstairs, and papa would be glad of your company, he sees so little change."

She gave the invitation—for invitation it was, and he knew it—in simple kindness of spirit, and her face neither flushed nor was averted before his calm, grave regard.

"I thank you," he said. "If I have remained in my own apartments more than I might have done it was from a reluctance to trespass upon Sir Ralph's kindness. I will do myself the honour of dining with you to-morrow."

She inclined her head.

"Papa will be pleased. What a beautiful little nook this is. How did you discover it?"

"I do not know," he replied, looking round. "In one of my walks. I generally make it my resting-place, it is quiet and shaded. This old tree serves for a leaning-place, and the birds are musical."

She looked at him, and it was on the tip of her tongue to say:

"And are you happy here?" but the old something, the nameless mournful dignity, prevented her. "Well, I almost envy you your retreat."

"I relinquish it on the spot," he said, quite gravely, "it is yours from this hour, Miss Melville."

"I shall never enter it again," she said, at once, and with emphasis. "I would not break its charm by lessening its solitude. It is yours, Mr. Clifford, and it shall remain so."

He inclined his head.

"There are some hundreds of others equally retired and beautiful."

"Then I will find one," she said.

"I was going to say that I would take one as a substitute," he added.

She laughed.

"No, this is yours. I would not accept it."

He rose.

"While you are resting I will go in search of Miss Lucas," he said, and this time Lilian did not detain him—indeed she seemed to have forgotten that she had ever refused to permit him.

He left his book on the tree and pushed into the undergrowth.

Lilian looked after him for a moment, then sank into a reverie.

As she had said it was a beautiful spot; the birds were singing melodiously; the shaded light fell softly on the moss; the tutor's voice, always low-pitched and musical, had chimed in with the air and the beauty of the place. Now it had ceased she felt—she was half-conscious rather—that something was missing. The melody was broken, the harmony was a note, a chord wanting. Her eyes wandering dreamily round fell on the book, she took it up and turned over the pages idly. Then naturally looked curiously at the flyleaf. Her curiosity was rewarded but poorly. The page bore a very slight inscription, simply:

"To Chi."

"Chi," she repeated, "It is short and musical. Not written by a woman's hand though. Yet who could tell. Chi! Short for Clifford! Yes, it must have been a woman."

Voices reached her, she put the book down hastily with a slight blush, though why she should have been ashamed of looking at the book she could not have explained.

"My dear Lilian!" said the monotonous voice of Miss Lucas, as that lady stepped into the glade with her expressionless face and not less expressionless embroidery, "where have you been? I feared you were lost."

"What, Kate, within a mile of dear old Rivershall?" laughed the heiress, banteringly. "Do not lead Mr. Clifford to think our people so disloyal. Sir," she added, turning to him with a look of pride, "there is not a cottage within ten miles at which I should not be at home."

He bowed.

"I believe it, Miss Melville," he said, quietly.

And with a slight inclination of the head the beautiful girl was led away.

He resumed his seat and his book, but the former was hard and uncomfortable, and the latter less beautiful than he had pronounced it, for he threw it down with a gesture of uneasiness, and took to pace across the moss backwards and forwards as he paced the gallery at the Hall.

When Mr. Clifford the following evening entered the drawing-room he found it occupied by a stranger—a young gentleman with a good-looking but rather insipid face, fair hair and blue but rather unmeaning eyes, and a gentlemanly bearing.

He was standing with his hands in his pockets, looking at the pictures, and turned as Mr. Clifford entered, expecting to see Sir Ralph.

He bowed, and the salutation was returned.

"Fine evening," he commenced. "Been a capital day for the hounds if it was a couple of months later. Do you hunt?"

Mr. Clifford shook his head.

"No, unfortunately."

"You are right, it's a fine sport, the rarest and grandest amusement going."

"Yes," said the tutor, "I have heard so."

The gentleman looked at him askance. A man who had only heard of hunting was, in his eye, a curiosity—or rather a monstrosity.

He looked him up and down critically, and shook his head decisively.

"You should hunt," he said, "you're made for it. This country's a rough 'un, wants a showy-made fellow, neat about the pastures. Now you—"

What the gentleman considered Mr. Clifford to be was to remain a mystery, for Sir Ralph entered with Lilian on his arm as an interruption.

"Ah, my dear Harry, how do you do?" he said, shaking hands, at which Miss Lilian followed suit.

"Let me introduce you—Mr. Clifford, Mr. Harry Besant."

The gentleman bowed again, this time with more formality.

"And how are the hounds?" asked Lilian, from her chair.

"Capital, first-rate condition," replied Mr. Besant, with ready enthusiasm. "We shall have a fine pack this season, Sir Ralph. I wish we could get Miss Melville to follow."

"Oh, I haven't the courage," said Lilian. "I'm afraid the moment I hear them tongsing."

"Nonsense," retorted Mr. Besant. "You've got quite as much pluck as the Warner girls, and see how they ride."

Lilian's lip curled slightly and there was a twinkle in her eyes.

"Ah, you are mistaken," she said. "Ask papa."

Sir Ralph shook his head and smiled.

"How did you come over, Harry?"

"On the brown cob, old Harkaway," replied the fox-hunter. "Three-quarters of an hour."

"So," thought the tutor, "Mr. Harry Besant lives within ten miles of Rivershall."

And with the thought he glanced at the sweet, girlish face before him.

"That's quick," said Sir Ralph. Then turning to Mr. Clifford, "I don't know whether you ride, Mr. Clifford?"

Mr. Clifford hesitated.

"No," he said, "I do not ride."

"Can't understand that," said Mr. Besant, with genuine astonishment.

And on the road to the dining-room he expatiated on the delights of equestrianism and the especial joy of riding to hounds.

He was evidently a favourite with Sir Ralph, possibly one with Lilian, for she talked to him with little reserve, and laughed freely at his mild jokes.

"She has known him since girlhood," thought the



silent tutor. "Boy and girl together, estates joining closely perhaps."

And, with a slight darkening of the brow, he took a longer look at the fair, insipid face.

But the conversation came his way, and, with a start, he exerted himself.

He could not ride, but he knew something of the horse it was evident.

Much to Mr. Besant's delight he could enumerate the various Arabian breeds, tell the heights and capabilities of the Spanish roan, and the Hungarian sheltie, and knew more of the physique and proper training of the animal than Mr. Besant himself.

Sir Ralph was surprised.

Lilian might have been, but she did not look it.

Mr. Besant was charmed. His opinion of the quiet gentleman went up twenty degrees on the spot, and, with the wine he grew pleasantly familiar, so much so that Mr. Clifford grew reserved, and murmuring: "Now for the change," said aloud: "How do you think Miss Melville progresses with her Italian, Sir Ralph?"

Mr. Besant pricked up his ears and stared.

"Very well, I think," said Sir Ralph, in his stately way. "I am confident that she will attain perfection if she but profit by your excellent teaching."

Then, seeing that Mr. Besant was looking with all his eyes—and mouth, which was wide open—for an explanation, and feeling that the quiet tutor had acted honourably in refusing to sail under false colours, he said:

"Mr. Clifford has undertaken to teach Lilian Italian. It is a beautiful language."

"Yes," said Mr. Besant, staring at the grave face opposite, entirely unconscious that the 'tutor fellow,' as he always afterwards called him, was enjoying in a grim way his uncouth bewilderment and surprise.

For politeness' sake, and to take from the shock something of its suddenness, Mr. Besant addressed a few more words to the tutor, but long before the wine was done with his conversation had been confined to Sir Ralph.

Lilian was at the piano when they re-entered the drawing-room, and Sir Ralph's white hand kept her there.

"Play us something, Lily; Harry is fond of music," he said, in the gentle, loving voice in which he always spoke to her.

She complied instantly, and in a clear, soft voice sang a simple little song.

Mr. Besant beat time with his enamel-leather-covered feet, and wagged his head with delight. The tutor-fellow grew sterner and more saturnine.

"Thank you, Miss Melville. By Jove! a treat, a perfect treat," said Mr. Besant, walking across to the piano with the tread of a groom, tempered by a whipper-in. "Won't you sing us something else? Do."

"Yes, if you wish it," said Lilian, good-naturedly. "What shall it be?" and she turned over the contents of the canterbury.

"Do you know 'Hurrah for a hunting morning?'" Lilian nodded.

Sir Ralph laughed.

"That's a gentleman's song, Harry. Hunting is never out of your head or heart. Give us my old favourite, Lily dear."

She sang the old song which she had hummed the night Mr. Clifford presented himself, and sang it sweetly.

Sir Ralph's eyes half closed; who would believe that there were tears under the lids? and Mr. Besant was still more enthusiastic, and the tutor more grim and stern.

To him Lilian turned with the sudden gesture.

"Do you like that, Mr. Clifford?"

He half started and bowed.

"Yes," he said.

He did not thank her, for he knew that Mr. Besant would deem his thanks presumption.

The beautiful girl crossed over to the low chair at Sir Ralph's feet, and a conversation on music, the opera, and the principal singers of the day was started.

She saw that a change had come over Mr. Besant's manner to Mr. Clifford, and glancing under her long eyelashes at his grave face knew, as if she had heard him, that he had explained his position in the house to the fox-hunting squire.

Her face grew wonderfully thoughtful, and then strangely sweet as she looked up suddenly, and, turning on the arm that rested on Sir Ralph's knee, said:

"Mr. Clifford, you sing?"

He looked for a moment as if he would deny it, but she gave him no time.

"Pray sing us something."

Again, as if obeying her absolute command, he rose and walked to the piano.

Sir Ralph settled himself with easy dignity as he would have prepared himself to hear a hired professional.

Mr. Besant stared with insolent curiosity.

The long white hands lingered on the keys for a few seconds, then he commenced in a full and sweetly musical voice, that held you and charmed you out of yourself before half a dozen bars were got through, a peasant's song of Provence.

The words were in English, simple, with no love meaning, plain, and manly.

The listeners were surprised, one of them might have owned to another feeling perhaps.

The singer got up and resumed his seat with grave composure.

"Sir," said Sir Ralph, with slow gravity, "you have an exceedingly pure voice. If you teach but half as well as you sing Miss Melville's Italian should be fluent."

Mr. Clifford bowed gratefully.

"May we trespass on your good nature for another?" said Sir Ralph.

"Certainly," said this tutor, taking this as fully a command as the other.

As he played the symphony the door opened, and Miss Lucas, who had dined in her own apartment that day and not appeared before this, entered.

She paused one moment, and if her eyes could have borne any expression that one would have been astonishment, but with her catlike tread she moved on to a seat and bent over her embroidery without the loss of a moment.

This time the song was in Italian. None but Lilian knew the meaning save the singer, but she remembered one verse as that which he had read in the wood, and so ailed the clue.

Mr. Besant found his voice by the time the song was concluded, and drowned Sir Ralph's encomiums with his

"Splendid, by Jove! Never heard anything like it, except at the opera."

Lilian rose and walked over to her companion. She had not thanked him by word or look, and he knew it.

"What a recluse you are, Kate," she said; "what have you been doing all the evening?"

"Writing some letters, my dear," replied the monotonous voice.

This reminded Mr. Clifford that he had some writing to do, and he retired for the night.

"He's a clever card that tutor-fellow," said Mr. Besant, barely giving the tutor-fellow time to get clear of his voice—"talks about horses like a book, and sings like a nightingale."

"Yes," said Sir Ralph, who did not like anything in which he had a proprietorship to be carelessly praised or blamed. "Mr. Clifford is an excellent young man, and a very clever one. An excellent young man."

"Yes," said Mr. Besant, "quite the gentleman too, eh? almost, eh?" and he looked round interrogatively.

Lilian turned to him with a calm, inquiring gaze.

"So you thought him a gentleman, did you, Mr. Besant?"

"Ye-s," said Mr. Besant, as if he were ashamed to admit it. "Yes, I did, 'pon my honour."

"Well," said Lilian, as quietly and simply as before, "I think the mistake was pardonable."

Mr. Besant's horse was at the door, and he took his leave.

Miss Lucas retired with noiseless footsteps.

Sir Ralph, with his daughter's beautiful head upon his breast, said:

"Well, Lily dear, Mr. Clifford sings well—he has a beautiful voice. Do you like him better than you did, my dear?"

Lily shrugged her shoulders with a pretty affectation of haughty indifference.

"No, papa, I cannot say I do. Mr. Clifford is perfection, but I abhor a paragon."

#### CHAPTER XX.

Independence!

Thou art the freeman's birthright.

MR. CLARENCE CLIFFORD'S performance at the pianoforte resulted the next morning in a message from Sir Ralph that he would be obliged if Mr. Clifford would give him a few minutes in the library.

Mr. Clifford sent word by the exquisite footman that he would do himself the honour of proceeding thither at once, and in a few minutes followed after.

"Good morning, Mr. Clifford," said Sir Ralph, with his usual stern stateliness. "I hope I have not disturbed your—ahem—studies."

"Not at all, sir," replied the tutor, seating himself in obedience to a wave of the aristocratic hand.

"I wished to speak to you in conformity to a wish of Miss Melville's, relative to your excellent performance last evening."

The tutor inclined his head and waited gravely and attentively.

The baronet straightened the ruffles of his shirt and continued:

"May I ask what opinion you have formed, as a master of the art, of Miss Melville's musical abilities?"

"That they are great, but untrained, unfinished," replied Mr. Clifford, at once.

"Just so, just so," said Sir Ralph. "Her own opinion, exactly. Having obtained your opinion, Mr. Clifford, I may put the proposal she wishes me to put, which is that you should add music to the Italian and superintend her studies in both directions."

The tutor nodded.

Sir Ralph, misunderstanding the reluctance, said, as quickly as was compatible with his dignity:

"I need not add that your salary would be increased by the usual fee of a professor of music."

A slight flash mounted to Mr. Clifford's brow for a moment but disappeared and left it clear again as he replied:

"You misunderstand my hesitation, Sir Ralph. I am doubtful whether I possess the capabilities required to undertake the duty you propose."

"Of that there can be little or no doubt," said Sir Ralph, decisively.

"Then I have only to say that I shall be only too honoured to direct Miss Melville's studies, but on one condition."

Sir Ralph half frowned.

"And pray what is that, sir?" he asked, haughtily.

"That the salary I receive in my present position shall not be increased. You may not be aware of the fact, Sir Ralph, but the sum you give me far exceeds the usual one paid for such services, and although I am grateful for your generosity I feel—you will pardon me, sir—that the independence which is every man's birthright is jeopardized in my case by doing so little for such remuneration."

Sir Ralph tried to feel offended, but he could not, the words were spoken with such manly, gentlemanly respect that he felt disarmed.

"Well, sir," he said, "I honour you for your scruples, though I think them needlessly Quixotic. It shall be as you wish."

The tutor bowed.

Sir Ralph rose.

"I will go and acquaint Miss Melville of your decision and learn when she will take the first lesson. I suppose any time will be convenient to you?"

"Any time, Sir Ralph," replied Mr. Clifford. "I will wait here to learn Miss Melville's pleasure."

"By no means," said the baronet. "I will send word to your apartments."

Mr. Clifford retired and Sir Ralph went to find Lilian.

She was evidently impatient, for the grand creature in plush summoned the "tooter" to the drawing-room, where Miss Melville in riding-habit and spurs was waiting.

"Good morning," she said, toying with her whip and blushing the least in the world. "Papa told me you would be so kind as to give me lessons in singing, and I thought I should like one now."

He glanced slightly at her riding-habit but not so slightly but that she noticed it.

"Yes," she said, as if he had spoken, "I was going for a ride, but Polly can wait, she will be all the fresher."

He bowed and set the stool ready.

She pulled off her gauntlets, flung them on a side table, and took her seat.

"Please play that," he said, opening an easy sonata of Haydn's.

"That!" she said; "why, any child of fourteen could get through that."

"Yes," he said, with a slight smile; "but not play it."

She was answered, and with a slight tremour at the fingers' ends, which she had never felt when her old music mistress presided, commenced the sonata.

He listened gravely till the end.

"You have played the notes correctly and the time is all right, but it is far from being Haydn's sonata yet. See there, play that more softly, bring that passage into relief."

"Like this?" she said, and played as he directed.

"Yes," he said. "Do you hear the difference?"

"Oh, yes," she said. "Strange, I never thought of that. I played it softly and loudly, slowly and quickly, but never got it to mean as much as it does now."

"And now will you sing the song you sang last night?"

She complied instantly, turning at its completion for his criticism.

"You sang it beautifully," he said, "all but the last two lines."

"Show me, show me," she said, quickly, rising from the stool. "Sing them as you would like them sung."

He seated himself at the piano with the same gravity with which he would a few hours later construe the passage in Italian for her behoof, and raising his voice sang the last verse, softening his

voice and making it inexpressibly tender at the last two lines

"So, let the world say what it will;  
For us one word alone "Farewell."

She listened—almost breathlessly hanging as it were on the last prolonged note, then with a burst of enthusiasm she exclaimed:

"Oh, what would I give to sing as you do!"

If he felt and relished the compliment he did not show it.

"Grave as ever he replied:

"Will you sing it so?"

"I'll try," she said, and tried successfully.

"You like it better?" he asked.

"Yes, infinitely. I am grateful," she added, "to you for making my song so much more sweet."

Impassable, stonily indifferent to her gratitude as he was to her compliments, he took up another, and yet another song, improving each in its turn, and showing her where to put the emphasis.

Never had Lillian been so gracious, so gentle, so bewitching.

A less rigorously self-sustained man would have lost his head as well as his breath before the lesson was half over.

But Mr. Clifford grew only the more grave, and when the climax came by the beautiful girl placing a duet on the stand and saying, with a winning smile, "Will you sing this with me?" his gravity leapt suddenly into sternness and his face grew set and hard as he turned, saying:

"The lesson is finished for to-day."

The tone more than the abrupt words recalled her to herself.

With a sudden flush, succeeded by as deep a pallor, she said, haughtily:

"Thank you. I am afraid I have given you very much trouble."

To him her words bore two meanings, "and with the bitterness of the one burning in his heart he bowed and left the room."

Could he have looked back he might have regretted.

Lillian, standing in the room crimson to the very roots of her hair, was trembling with wounded modesty and crying:

"Oh, what have I done? Oh, dear, oh, dear, why wasn't Kate in the room to take care of me? I forgot my place and slipped out of it; he knew his and pushed me back—savagely—too savagely!"

Polly found her usually gentle mistress rather capricious that morning and very free with the whip and the dainty spur.

Perhaps if she had known that her beautiful young mistress was being whipped and pricked by her own conscience quite as freely she might have been comforted.

Soon after Lillian had started for her gallop Sir Ralph had his own light trap brought round, intending to drive to an outlying farm the tenant of which was suing for some repairs.

Sir Ralph was proud of his estate and fond, in his austere way, of showing it.

Now it looked to its best advantage, and it was not unnatural that on overtaking Mr. Clifford on his road he should ask him to accompany him.

And as all Sir Ralph's requests were made in the tone of commands still less strange that the man who never disobeyed them should at once take a seat beside the baronet.

They reached the farm, Sir Ralph pointing out the places of interest on the route and receiving with evident pleasure the as evidently sincere admiration which Mr. Clifford showed for the scenery and the condition of the estate generally.

The tenant, an old-fashioned farmer, with little to say beyond expressing his obstinacy in demanding the repairs, got his way and Sir Ralph turned the horse's head.

"That house," said he, pointing with his whip, "is Besant Towers."

"It is a fine house," said the tutor, looking at it with interest.

"Yes, a grand place; not so old as Rivershall," added the baronet, "but a grand old mansion. The land joins mine, and, if anything, is richer; the timber is exceedingly good and beautiful."

"The gentleman whom I saw the other evening is, I presume, the son of the owner," surmised Mr. Clifford.

"The owner himself," replied Sir Ralph. "His father died some years back, he lives there with his mother, Lady Besant."

Mr. Clifford was about to make some remark when the sudden appearance of the gentleman in question stopped him.

He was riding down the lane on a stout, well-made cob, and pulled up with a stare of mild astonishment at the sight of the tutor-fellow riding at his ease beside the baronet.

"Hullo, Sir Ralph! who the deuce would have thought of seeing you? Good morning, Mr. Clifford. Not going home, eh?"

"Yes," said Sir Ralph. "We have been to see

Giles, he wants some repairs again. I believe that when he is dead and buried he will rise to request the sexton to see after his coffin."

"Hah! hah!" laughed Mr. Besant, "that's good. But I say, you know, you must come back and see my mother. Oh, but you must," as Sir Ralph opened his lips. "By Jove! if you don't I'll tell her I met you and that you refused; you know what she is, she'll never forgive. What! Sir Ralph within five minutes of the Towers and never called!"

And, laughing again, he backed his horse right across the path.

"Well," said Sir Ralph, his stately, even-toned voice contrasting strangely with the strident one of Mr. Besant's, "if you insist upon it."

And he turned the horse.

Mr. Clifford rose to get down.

"I will leave you here, sir," he said. "There is a short cut—"

"No, no, Mr.—Mr. —"

"Clifford," suggested Sir Ralph.

"Mr. Clifford, you must come and see the Towers, can't think of letting you go back all that doose of a way."

But Mr. Clifford begged to be excused, and had got one foot on the ground when Sir Ralph, as quietly as usual, said:

"If you are not pressed for time, Mr. Clifford—"

The tutor got up again at once, and Sir Ralph drove on with Mr. Besant trotting at the side.

(To be continued.)

#### THE FIRST LEAF OF AUTUMN.

I SEE thee fall, thou quivering leaf,

Of faint and yellow hue,

The first to feel the autumn winds,

That, blighting, o'er thee blow—

Slow parted from the rocking branch,

I see thee floating by,

To brave, all desolate and lone,

The black autumnal sky.

Alas! the first, the yellow leaf—

How sadly falls it there,

To rustle on the crisped grass,

With every chilly air!

It tells of those that soon must drop,

All withered from the tree,

And it hath waked a sadder chord

In deathless memory.

Thou eddying leaf, away, away,

There's sorrow in thy hue;

Thou sound'st the knell of sunny hours

Of buds and liquid dew—

And thou dost tell how from the heart

The blooms of hope decay;

How each lingers, loth to part,

Till all are swept away.

E. O. S.

**GIVING OFFENCE.**—It is utterly impossible that two ordinary persons should live contentedly together and not offend each other sometimes. The offence may not be intentional; it may occur inadvertently. In order to enjoy life all unintentional offences ought to be forgiven. It would be well, however, if persons studied not to give offence even unintentionally.

**A RARE COIN.**—A few days before the Queen's visit a Scotch coin of Queen Mary—the last Sovereign who visited Inverness before her present Majesty—was dug up in a garden in town. An expert describes the coin as follows:—On the obverse are the Royal arms, crowned, between the letters M.R.; a heart with a star of five points punched in, effacing the M., and the inscription, "Maria Dei G. Scotia: Regina, 1557;" reverse, an orle of four crescents, in each of which is a small crown; in the centre a cross, with the inscription, "Servio et Usty. Terror, 1557." The coin is in very fair preservation. For a considerable time previously no coin of the unfortunate Scottish queen has been found in this quarter.

**DISCOVERY OF ANCIENT GRAVES IN CUMBRAE.**—Of all the improvements that have taken place in the Island of Cumbrae for some time the greatest is being at present executed. The island, as is well known, belongs to the Marquis of Bute and the Earl of Glasgow, and these noblemen are causing a carriage-road and foot-path to be made round the island. When completed the drive will be a pleasant one of eleven miles. The workmen engaged in making the road at Fintry Bay came recently on three ancient graves. The Rev. Mr. McCallum, who was present when one of them was uncovered, describes them as being within a few feet of each other, and 115 feet from the ordinary high-water mark. The westmost grave, he says, is 3 feet long, 2 feet 2 inches broad, and 2 feet deep. It lies north-east and south-west. The middle grave is only 1 foot 10 inches long, 1 foot 3 inches broad, and 1 foot 7 inches deep. Its direc-

tion is north and south. The eastmost grave, which also lies north and south, is 4 feet long. These graves or cists are formed of red sandstone slabs. The two first noticed graves were covered to the depth of 4 feet, and the third 1 to 2 feet. A few years ago similar graves were discovered at Portray Bay. One of those at the latter place contained an urn in good preservation, but nothing of importance was found in those at the former spot. The Rev. Mr. McCallum thinks it possible places of sepulchre contained remains of the Cymbri, the ancient British, from whom the name of the islands is derived.

#### THE DEVIL FISH.

**I NOTICE** in your last issue an illustration representing a devil fish. Until I saw it, and your announcement of two living specimens, I was unaware that any living specimens existed in the world. My attention was particularly attracted to the matter because I have a most perfect fellow (in alcohol), and have earnestly endeavoured to find out how many there were in Europe. If the one in the Hamburg aquarium is but two feet from tip to tip, mine is more than as large again, being four feet three inches. The smaller one has, however, the advantage of being alive.

The strength which these creatures possess is almost beyond comprehension, as is evidenced by what took place when my pet (?) was captured. He had seized hold of a submarine diver, at work in the wreck of a sunken steamer off the coast of Florida. The man was a powerful Irishman, who claimed to weigh three hundred pounds. His size and build fully verified his statement, and, to use his own language, "the basto landed on top of my shoulders and pinned my arms tight. I felt my armour and myself being cracked into a jelly." It seems that he was just about being brought to the surface, else the monster would have killed him, for he was suffering so from the terrible embrace that he could move no part of himself. When dragged on to the raft from which he had descended, and finally released, he had fainted. The men on the raft seized the fish by one of its wriggling arms, and tried to pull it off, but could not break the power of a single one of the suckers. The fish was only removed by being dealt a heavy blow across the sack containing the stomach. This sack stood rigidly up above the eyes, while the eyes stood out like lobster's eyes and gleamed like fire. The monster is, all in all, one of the most frightful apparitions it could be the fate of a man to meet. It fulfils in every particular the horrible features attributed to it in Victor Hugo's "Toilers of the Sea." Notwithstanding the severity with which the able Frenchman has been criticized for "creating a nondescript with his weird imagination," the truth must be granted that his "nondescript" has an actual existence, as is evidenced by the specimens in Brighton and Hamburg, as well as my own. The likeness of the picture to mine is perfect in every particular.

C. B. B.

**TIMELY RELIEF.**—It having been made known to the Emperor William that a grand-daughter of Beethoven, Caroline von Beethoven, is at present living at Vienna in great destitution, His Majesty has generously ordered that during her lifetime five per cent. of the proceeds from the performance of Beethoven's opera of "Fidelio" at the Royal Opera at Berlin shall be regularly assigned to her use.

**NATURALIZATION AMONG THE ARRAPHOES.**—A curious law of naturalization prevails—or at least did prevail amongst them, which any man, either white or red, could avail himself of. The applicant was simply required to bring to the chief a horse swift enough to hunt the buffalo on, and another horse or mule capable of carrying a load of 200 lb. His intentions being made known, he was declared a member of the tribe, with all the honours, dignities, and immunities thereunto attached. A wife was then provided for him. "The wife of an Arraphoe takes care of his horses; manufactures his saddles and bridles, leash-ropes and whips, his mocassins, leggings, and hunting-shirts, from leather and other materials prepared by her own hands; beats with a wooden adze his buffalo robes, till they are soft and pleasant for his couch; tans hides for his tent covering, and drags from the distant hills the clean white pine poles to support it; cooks his daily food and places it before him; and should sickness overtake him, and Death rap at the door of his lodge, his squaw watches kindly the last yearnings of the departing spirit. His sole duty, as her lord in life and as a member of the Arraphoe tribe, is to ride the horse which she saddles and brings to his tent, kill the game which she dresses and cures, sit or slumber on the couch which she spreads, and fight the enemies of the tribe." Does civilization supply much more, even on terms not widely different in kind though in degree?





[THE LOST TRAIL.]

# THE DEATH SHADOW OF THE MIAMI.

## CHAPTER I.

A mighty hunter, and his prey was man. Pope. Revenge maintains her empire in the breast, Though every other feeling freezes to rest.

"HERE the trail runs into the water. What can have become of them, Luke?"

The speaker was a young man of perhaps five-and-twenty. Of medium height and a well-knit frame, with a frank, open expression upon his countenance, he was one that would attract the attention of a stranger and affect him favourably.

His garb was that worn by many backwoodsmen of his day. It consisted of a complete suit of buckskin, evidently of Indian make, as it was ornamented by many fanciful devices. In his right hand he carried the usual long rifle of the day, the shining barrel of which was without a speck of rust, showing that he bestowed much care and attention upon it, so that it might not fail him when perhaps his very life might depend upon its doing him faithful service.

In his belt, which was buckled tightly about him, were thrust his hunting-knife and a brace of pistols, so that even did his faithful rifle become for the moment unserviceable he still had weapons with which he could defend himself.

A look of eager anxiety was on his face, and his eyes, which had rested upon the earth until he had reached the bank of the river, were now cast quickly up and down the stream, as though they were in search of something of which they had lost the trace.

Such in looks and appearance was Harry Libby, the young hunter, at the moment when we introduce him to the notice of the reader.

His companion, to whom his words were addressed, came close behind him, and so noticeable was his appearance that it will warrant a description.

His age was somewhat in the neighbourhood of fifty, although he looked much younger.

His heavy beard and hair were threaded here and there with silver, but his countenance was still fresh.

His form, which reached an altitude of six feet and a half, was as straight as an arrow. His garments were similar to those of his companion, although they showed far more the wear and tear of forest life to which they had been subjected.

Across his shoulder was flung a rifle almost as long as himself. A huge hunting-knife was thrust into his

belt, to which were also suspended his powder-horn and bullet-pouch.

His form, tall as it was, did not seem at all out of proportion, for his shoulders were broad, and the huge sinews of his limbs indicated great strength. There did not seem to be a pound of surplus flesh upon his entire frame.

Such in appearance was Luke Hawkins, the scout, who was reckoned all through the Miami country as the bravest borderman that trod the pathless wilds of the forest.

He was known among the settlers as the Forest King, a name not ill-deserved.

The savages—so inveterate an enemy was he to them, and so many of them had he slain—called him the Death Shadow of the Miami.

Ever lurking about the river when duty called him there, for its banks and waters were a great thoroughfare for the redskins, they gave him a name associated with it.

Hardly ever was his giant counterfeit reflected in the water but what one red man at least went under.

The settlers in their cabins talked of the hundred redskins he years ago had made a vow to slay, and were sure that the reckoning was nearly or quite complete.

He had formerly been a tiller of the soil like themselves, and had only made war upon the forest trees, save when danger threatened; but once, while absent from home, his wife and child had been slain and his cabin burned to ashes.

There, by its blackened remains and the charred and mutilated corpses of his wife and child, he had made the vow which the settlers on the Miami were sure he had carried well nigh to fulfilment.

Never since the hour when the discovery of his loss had been made had he given thought to the clearing in which his cabin had stood. Weeds had usurped the entire space, save one spot beneath the branches of a huge oak.

Here he had gathered together what remained unconsumed of the bodies of his wife and child, and buried them tenderly with his own hands, with no one near to assist him in the sad task.

Above them he planted wild flowers, which bloomed luxuriantly in their season, the graves being at all times kept free from briars and bushes.

This spot he visited often, both summer and winter, and always alone. He wanted no human eye to witness his emotion, which was shown at no other time and place.

Such was Luke Hawkins, and what was known of his history, and now we return to matters that more intimately concern our story.

The time was afternoon. The sun was some two hours above the tree tops, where he hung like a huge ball of fire in the unclouded summer sky. The place was the western bank of the Miami, some three miles from the verge of the nearest settlement.

Since noon Luke and his companion had been following on a trail which they had struck in the forest while on a hunting expedition, which they had set out on two days before from the settlement in which they resided.

Of late Luke had found little to do. The savages had been very quiet, and no outrage on their part had been reported. Therefore he had invited his young friend to a hunt with him, and they were on their homeward way again, when they had struck the trail of which we have made mention, and from the inspection of which they judged some new outrage against the settlers had been perpetrated by the redskins.

Intermingled with the footprints of a couple of savages were those of another, which they had no difficulty in deciding, from the size, and being made by a shoe, were made by a woman, and a white one.

They were small, and it was evident that the woman was of slight build. No sooner had they set their eyes upon it than they knew that some one of their own race had been so unfortunate as to fall into the hands of the savages.

This was enough for them to know. They saw their duty, and at once resolved to perform it. A fear, which he had not as yet given expression to in words, oppressed the heart of Harry as he looked upon the imprint the little foot had made.

Ruth Lee, his own betrothed wife, lived in the settlement from which the footsteps seemed to come, and he was fearful that it was she who had fallen into the hands of the redskins.

Taught by Luke, he knew something of woodcraft, and he could follow a trail passing well; but it took the scout's accustomed eyes to determine the freshness of a trail.

Carefully Luke had scrutinized the one before them, and had read there, easier perhaps than he could read the page of a book, the time that had passed since the savages, with their captive, had gone that way.

He was as firmly convinced in his own mind that it had been since noon as he was that they were now standing gazing down upon it.

But one thought or determination animated the mind of each, and this was to follow on the trail, rescue the captive, and punish her captors if possible.

This they had undertaken at once, and the trail had brought them to the river, where the exclamation

which we have recorded fell from the lips of Harry, who at this point chanced to be in the advance.

Luke stepped past his companion and went down to the water's edge.

Hidden from the observation of any who might be afloat upon the water by the thick bushes on either side, he gave a quick glance up and down the stream. But there was no object to be seen on its unruffled bosom. The water lay as untroubled as the smooth face of a mirror.

"Strange," he muttered, half to himself and half in answer to the query Harry had made. "I don't see how the varmints got across if across they went. Let me see if they ain't like muskrats and have hid their trail in the bank."

"I don't see how that can be," said Harry. "Here it is as plain as anything can be, leading down to the water's edge, and for the life of me I can see no sign where it turns up or down the bank."

"Well, there's one thing sartin, they never swam across the stream with their captive. It would be a hard job to do if she was minded to go, as of course she wasn't. They either had a canoe hereabouts which took them over, or else they've got up or down the stream. Which it is for the life of me I can't find out, but I will afore I leave this spot. I would give something if I could tell now who it is they've got into their clutches."

"Do you know that I'm afraid it is Ruth Lee," said Harry, in a tone which told of the fear which was in his heart.

"What? not little Ruth—that gal of yours?"

"Yes."

"What makes you think so?"

"Because this footprint here looks so much like hers."

"That ain't no reason. Gals leave their marks pretty much alike behind 'em. But some of 'em I suppose have got bigger feet than others. This one here ain't hardly bigger than a child's."

"Ruth's isn't, and that's what makes me think that it is hers. But I hope I'm mistaken. If harm should come to her it would kill her mother. You know that the redskins took her father's life last year."

"Yes, and they paid dearly for it too. A good half-dozen of 'em went under for doing that job."

"Yes, Luke, I know he was avenged; but that didn't bring him back to life. But you do know that I have often thought that the most guilty one of all escaped."

"No?"

"But I am almost sure of it."

"Who was it?"

"The renegade who has joined his fortune with the savages—he whom we know by the name of Justin Litch."

"Don't you think that is his real name?"

"No. The Lees are sure that it is not."

"What do they think it is?"

"Before they came west Robert Lee had an enemy, who swore that he would be their ruin. This he effected so far as their property was concerned, and then, to escape the penalty of his crime, he fled, and was seen no more. He was supposed to have gone west, but it was never known to a certainty. To mend their fortunes the Lees came here, and shortly afterwards, as you know, the husband and father was slain. Since then the mother and daughter have become convinced, from the description they have had of the renegade, Justin Litch, that it is their old enemy, Hiram Bailey. If this is so, and Ruth is indeed in the hands of the redskins, as I fear, I have no doubt but that the renegade is at the bottom of it."

"Well, it may be so; but I hope you are mistaken, and that the gal is safe; but, if it proves to be so, we've got a work before us that we won't give up until we've made the villain smart for his perfidy. I've had my eyes on the scamp for some time, for I knew his being with the redskins wasn't for no good. If I can only bring my rifle to bear on him once more I'll settle his score for him. But now to find the trail agin, if we can, which the varmints have hid in the water."

While this conversation had been going on they had both stood close to the water's edge, where the trail had apparently ended. The water at this point was shoal close to the bank, being not more than a couple of feet in depth, and so clear that the sandy bottom could be seen without difficulty.

Carefully Luke scrutinized the sand at the bottom for a minute, and then slowly moved down the stream with his eyes fixed upon the water.

Harry followed in his footsteps, and for a little time they went on without making any discovery or a word passing between them.

Suddenly Luke uttered an exclamation which told his companion that he had struck upon the clue they were searching for.

"What is it? What have you found?" demanded Harry, eagerly.

The scout pointed down into the water.

"Look, and tell me what you see there!" he said, in a triumphant tone.

"I don't see anything," answered Harry, after he had closely scrutinized the spot toward which Luke pointed.

"What have you got eyes for if it ain't to use 'em?" exclaimed the scout. "I'm afraid, Harry, that you ain't got your learning yet."

"I confess to that, and also that I can see nothing there."

"Don't you see any marks in the sand under the water?"

"No. All I can see is a spot here and there where the water has been a little ruffled, and where now it has settled down again."

"And what more do you want? They have waded along here, stepping carefully in each other's tracks so as to make as little disturbance on the bottom as possible, and hoping that the water would hide that little. But Luke Hawkins has been too long in this line of business to be cajoled by any such plan as this. Forging here can't be done unless a feller has legs as long as the trunks of these 'ore trees. I know'd that the varmints hadn't gone across unless they had a canoe in this place—which I didn't believe they had. All we've got to do now is to follow down the bank, and we'll soon find where the trail has took to land again."

"I hope we may, for I am anxious to lose no time here. I want to find out who it is who has fallen into their hands as soon as possible. By the looks on the bottom there it wasn't done a great while ago."

"It may be an hour, and it may have been two. There ain't no current to wipe out the tracks, so they will show for some time yet. But come on, and let us see how long they paddled along in the water, thinking to throw dirt in the eyes of any who might strike the trail as we've happened to do."

Keeping close to the water's edge, they passed down the bank, with their eyes fixed upon the signs they saw in the bottom. For perhaps twenty rods they kept on this way, and then, at a point where the current of the river set in towards the shore, they saw abundant signs of where the savages had been forced ashore, owing to the depth of the water.

"I told you so," said Luke, triumphantly. "They thought they would foil somebody by this manoeuvre. Now we have the trail plain enough, and all we've got to do is to go on."

"You can read them better than I can," said Harry. "There is a good deal that you can teach me in woodcraft yet."

"I suppose I can, youngster. A man can't get his larnin' in a minute. It has cost me a good deal of time and patience. But look here. See what you've gone by. Like as not it will give us a clue as to who the gal is they carried off."

He held up as he spoke a bit of cloth, which, having caught upon a dry stick, had apparently been torn from the dress of the wearer.

Harry turned as pale as death.

"It is a piece of Ruth's dress!" he said. "I felt from the first that it was her that the redskins were carrying off."

Harry took the bit of cloth from the scout's hand and gazed earnestly upon it. It was undoubtedly torn from the dress Ruth Lee had worn the last time he had seen her, only two days before, and he was as firmly convinced that his fears as to the identity of the captive had proved true as he would have been had he seen her in the hands of the savages.

For the space of a minute he stood thus gazing in silence upon it, and then he placed it in his pocket as carefully as if it were some cherished memento that he wished to preserve.

"Then you are sure that it is little Ruth?" said the scout, who had been watching his face and his movements with much interest.

"As sure as I am that we are standing here."

"Well, I'm mighty sorry that she has got into trouble, Harry; and for your sake I wish that it had been somebody else, though after all it would have been just as bad. But don't look so down-hearted about it—we've got the trail now, and if we don't find her I'm greatly mistaken. They ain't got a great ways the start of us, and if we only had a little more daylight we would come up with them afore a great while. There ain't no moon, and from the looks of the sky I'm afraid that it will be pretty dark when night comes. But do you really think that Justin Litch has had a hand in this business?"

"I am sure of it."

"If he has he shall pay dear for it. I've not caught him up to any dirty work yet; but a man don't stay among the redskins for nothing. He soon gets to be as bad as they are, if he wasn't wus when he quartered with 'em. If he has a hand in this work agin the Lees he shall pay dear for it. But there's one thing I'm pretty sure of—he ain't gone along this

trail. There's no footprints 'cept the redskins' here, unless it is the gal's."

"He wouldn't dare to venture so near the settlement in daylight, for fear that he would be recognized by some one who knew him of old. But something seems to tell me that this is his work, and that he himself is not far away."

"I hope he is not: I want nothing better than to set eyes on him, and to find that he is mixed up in this matter. It would do me more good to send a bullet through him than it would to kill a dozen redskins."

"But we shall not find him if we stay here," said Harry, impatiently. "Let us follow on the trail as fast as we can."

"I'm ready, youngster. I've only been waiting for you to get through looking at that piece of calico. Now that you have we'll be off. The sun's getting well down to the tree-tops, and its light won't last us much longer. We've got to use what there is left to some purpose, I can tell you, or they'll give us the slip. If they do, and get the gal to the village, we shall have trouble in getting her out of their clutches."

"I'm afraid that we shall as it is, if Justin Litch is the instigator of the abduction."

"We'll do the best we can, and we won't give up trying as long as there is a ghost of a chance. Since I've followed the calling of a scout, I've been where the chances seemed more agin me than they do now. There would have been a lot more savages prowling round here than there is now if it hadn't been for me and my rifle."

"From what I have seen I have no doubt of that," answered Harry. "And had it not been for you I'm afraid that there would have been far less white folks here as well. You have saved the lives of a good many within the few years past."

"I've tried to do my duty, youngster, and if I've failed anywhere it was because I didn't know any better. Ever since that time I've fought the varmints with tooth and nail whenever there was a chance."

"I know you have," said Harry, "and I only hope we shall have the luck that has followed you thus far."

Here the conversation ceased, and, throwing his rifle over his shoulder, Luke strode along the trail with Harry close upon his heels.

It lay plain before them, following down the bank of the river.

It was clear now that the savages had taken no pains to conceal it. Evidently they thought it was broken in the water, and that no eyes would be sharp enough to put it together again. But in this the redskins had been mistaken, as we have seen.

They should have learned by this time that the sharp eyes of Death Shadow could track them out as unerringly as the bloodhound when on the scent. Never yet had they been able to deceive him long when he was upon their track in earnest. This many of them knew to their sorrow; although few of them had survived to tell the story of the vengeance he had wrought upon them. Seldom it was that any of them escaped him when in his own mind he had pronounced their death-warrant.

Slowly the sun sank downwards as the scout and his young friend hurried forward on their errand of mercy and vengeance.

Neither had any thought of turning back until they had rescued Ruth Lee and avenged the outrage upon her.

Luke Hawkins had said to himself that not one of them should escape, and he went to make good his word.

The same feelings were now dominant in his mind that had ever been there since the hour when he gazed upon the remains of his lost ones so foully murdered. The vengeance he meditated against the race of his despoilers was by no means accomplished.

It would not be while life and strength remained with which he could strike a blow to avenge those so dear to him.

At last the sun reached the tree-tops, and slowly the golden light died out from the forest, and the shadows of evening at once began to fill the nooks and hollows with their dusky forms.

A little longer and night would be down, and then to follow the trail would be impossible, for, as we have said, there was no moon to partly illuminate the forest aisles.

The stars, too, would hardly be able to give out their pale light, for the sky, as the sun went down, began to grow overcast away to the south and east.

This Luke and his companion knew well, and thus it was that they had made the haste along the trail that they had.

They were hoping to come up with the savages, or somewhere in their vicinity, before the darkness



should hide the trail and so render it incapable of being followed.

Fainter and fainter grew the light in the forest, and at last even the experienced eye of Luke Hawkins could not discern the footprints of the savages.

Convinced at last that it was uncertain whether they were on the trail or not, the scout abruptly came to a stop.

"What is it? Have you seen anything?" demanded Harry, eagerly.

Luke replied in the negative.

"Why do you stop, then?" he asked, impatiently.

"Because I've lost the trail."

"That is unfortunate, but I do not wonder at it. I can hardly see how you have kept it for the last twenty minutes. No one, unless he had eyes like an owl, could hope to keep on it in this darkness."

"You are right there, youngster. It is getting so dark that a feller can nigh about cut it with a knife."

"What can we do now?"

"There ain't but one way that I know, and that is to keep on down the river and trust to luck to take us right. But the chances of our finding 'em are agin us, I'll allow. If they stop and don't kindle a camp-fire we may stumble upon 'em afore me know it, and so run into a difficulty. They won't be apt to light a fire if they have any idea that they're followed. Then it may be that they'll cross the river somewhere hereabouts; and if they do we shall miss 'em."

"But they can't ford across anywhere along here, if I remember aright."

"No; but they may have a canoe hidden along here somewhere. I know that they keep them on the river, and they may have used one to-day if they came over from the village, as most likely they did. If we could have had another hour of daylight it would have been all I would have asked for."

"What can we do? I can never bear to lay over here until morning. By that time they may have got such a start that all our efforts to find them will be useless."

"We ain't got but one way to do, and that is to go on and take the chances, which I'll allow are agin us. We'll keep close by the river and our eyes and ears open. It may be that luck will help us get a clue to 'em."

"There don't seem to be any other way," said Harry, after a moment's thought. "Oh, Ruth, I fear that you are lost to me!" he exclaimed, in a despondent tone.

"Cheer up, youngster. 'Tain't no use to be down-hearted. I've seen things look a good deal worse than this and then had them come out all right after all. We're going to be even with the varmints yet."

"I hope we shall, but I can't help thinking that it will be otherwise. The darkness helps them instead of us. But let us go on and do what we can."

Luke moved on again and they pursued their darksome way through the forest.

Their pace was faster now, for they made no effort to keep the trail.

The river was their guide and thus far the savages had followed its general course.

Still they were far from certain that they were going right.

The redskins might have turned from the river, or they might have crossed it.

They were going on uncertainties now, and every step might be carrying them farther from those of whom they were in pursuit.

For an hour they went on in this way, and then Luke paused again.

"Confound the luck!" he muttered, to himself.

"This going on without a clue I despise. I'm afraid, youngster, that we shall have to lay by until morning. The clouds are growing thicker every minute, and it is all that I can do to feel my way along. Then we ain't sure but what we're going away from 'em instead of following after, as we ought to."

"I have been thinking of that all the time," said Harry, despondingly. "We've lost all trace of them, and I see no chance of finding it again—not until morning, at least, and by that time it may rain, and so wash out all signs of the trail. I fear that there is little chance of rescuing Ruth for a long time to come, even if it can ever be accomplished."

"It ain't no use to think so, my boy. We've got to keep up a good heart and work like beavers when we've got a job to do. I'll give in that things do look rather discouraging just now; but then they say it's always the darkest just afore the dawn. But if it is any darker than it is now we shall have to trust wholly to feeling, for we shan't be able to see an inch afore our faces."

"What do you think we had better do?"

Luke made no answer, and Harry again repeated his question.

"Hush!" came in a warning tone from the lips of the scout, and then the two men remained standing as mute as death.

Harry strained both eyes and ears to catch, if he could, the reason of the scout's exclamation.

But he neither saw nor heard anything. For the space of a minute neither moved a limb, and then Harry asked, in a whisper:

"What is it, Luke? Have you seen anything?"

"No, but I heard something," the scout answered, in the same tone.

"What was it?"

"A footstep close behind us. There are redskins hereabouts, I'm sartin."

"Do you think they have got a trace of us?"

"There is no reason why they shouldn't. If they've got ears they couldn't help hearing us tramping along."

For the space of another minute they were mute and motionless.

A silence most profound was about them. Not so much as the rustle of a leaf broke the stillness that reigned in the forest. If there were enemies near they were as motionless as themselves.

"Don't stir from your tracks, boy," said the scout, in the same whispered tone. "I'm going to take a look round here for a few minutes, though it is precious little that I shall see, I expect. Feeling around would be the better name for it. If there are redskins on our track I want to see what they are up to."

"Why not let me go with you?"

"Because you ain't so used to this business as I am. Keep quiet here until I come back. If you hear any sound near you look out for danger."

"But how will you find this spot again in the dark?"

"If you hear the hoot of an owl just you answer it, although not very loud. That'll be all the sign I want to find the spot again."

The next moment the scout had glided away in the darkness, leaving Harry standing bolt upright and motionless.

Everything was so still about him that he could hear the rapid beating of his heart. It seemed to him that never before had he known such a profound silence in the forest.

As the dead calm precedes the storm, so he could not help thinking that a sudden change was about to come.

## CHAPTER II.

Never ending, still beginning,  
Fighting still, and still destroying.

*Dryden.*

AFTER parting with his companion Luke Hawkins moved slowly away from the spot, his steps turned from the bank of the river. He had no definite point in his mind towards which he would turn his footsteps, but set forth at random.

He thought that by moving silently about the spot he might run upon the savages, if, as he was convinced, there were any watching his movements.

To be sure the sound which had fallen upon his ears was a slight one; but then he had been quick to tell that it was made by a savage instead of some prowling wild beast. He was so well educated in woodcraft that it was not often that he was mistaken in such a matter as this.

He felt as sure that a savage had been the author of the sound he had heard as he would have been had he stood face to face with him.

He saw that it was a game of hide-and-seek between them, and that owing to the dense darkness there was no great prospect of either side winning.

But he wished to find out if possible how many there were, and what their game was. He thought it more than probable that they were of the party whose trail they had been following, and that Ruth Lee was not far away.

He had not said this much to Harry, for he did not wish to awaken hopes that might not be realized.

With these thoughts passing in his mind he moved noiselessly onward, taking care that not so much as a leaf rustled beneath his feet. His ears were on the alert to catch the slightest sound, but for the space of several minutes a hush like that of death pervaded the forest. It seemed as though all nature was asleep. For something like a hundred rods he went on in a direct course from the river, which brought him to the summit of a slight eminence.

Here he paused and gazed carefully around on either side; but he saw nothing save the blackness of the night, which shrouded everything like a pall.

Turning to the right, he went on again for a few paces, and then suddenly paused.

His eye had caught a glimpse of an object he had been seeking for.

A pale light flickered away before him in the forest.

For a moment it would shine brightly, and then

appear to flicker and die out, only to flash up again in a little time.

At first the thought had occurred to him that it might be only a will-o'-the-wisp dancing over a marshy place in the forest, but a little closer observation told him that it was stationary.

He was assured now that it shone out from a small camp-fire, and a feeling of satisfaction and triumph filled his breast.

Gathered about the fire, he had no doubt, were the captors of Ruth Lee, and she among them.

He wondered that they should have escaped with their captive without putting the river between them and those who might be following in pursuit; but it might be that she had become fatigued and could go no farther that night.

For a moment he hesitated as to what was the best course for him to pursue.

Should he go back for Harry, or proceed alone to acquaint himself with what was going on about the camp-fire?

He was inclined to the latter, but a second thought decided him otherwise.

He knew that Harry would be impatiently awaiting his return, and that every minute would seem an age to him, and, beside that, he might be in danger.

He was sure that one redskin, at least, had been near the spot, and others might be lurking about. Unmindful of his situation, in his anxiety Harry might make some sound that would draw them to the spot, and so fall an easy prey into their hands.

Convinced now that he should return for Harry before approaching the camp-fire, the scout turned his steps as near as he could in the direction of the spot where they had parted.

One less used to the forest than he was would have gone wide of the spot in the darkness, but he had been placed too often in a like position to go far astray.

Hurriedly but noiselessly he went on, and in a few minutes' time felt convinced that he was approaching the spot where he had left his companion.

Not knowing but what he might pass him by, or that in the darkness Harry would mistake him for a savage, and give him the contents of his rifle, he paused and gave utterance to the signal which had been agreed upon between them.

The most experienced woodsman would have sworn that it was the hoot of an owl that woke the echoes of the forest, so near was the imitation to the cry uttered by that bird. Over and over again was it echoed by wood and river, and then died away in the far distance. Moment after moment went by, and still the answering signal did not come.

A silence, if possible, more profound than before reigned around—a silence so great that it could almost be felt.

What could be the reason of Harry's silence? Surely he must have heard it; for, according to his calculation, the spot where he had left him standing was not more than twenty yards away. Could it be possible that harm could have come to his friend during the few moments he had been absent?

He hardly knew what else to think.

Again he uttered the signal, and once more the echoes took it up and repeated it over and over again, but the answering sign for which he waited came not.

"Whatever can it mean?" he muttered to himself. "Surely something has happened to the boy. I'm sorry I left him behind. If the redskins have sent him under I shall never forgive myself. But it may be that he didn't understand that he was to answer. At any rate I'll hold on here, and give him a chance to come up. I'll give another hoot, so that he can't miss me, and I think that'll bring him along all right."

Once more he sent forth the dismal hoot. One, two, five minutes passed, and there was no sign of the coming of Harry, nor any answering signal to show that he was alive.

Luke was now alarmed, and firmly convinced in his mind that something was wrong.

Harry had had now more than double the time that was necessary for him to have reached the spot, had he been in a condition to have done so.

Thinking it useless to remain longer there, he was on the point of starting to try and find the spot where he had left him when a slight sound near at hand arrested his attention.

Nevertheless he stood, with his ears strained to listen for a repetition of the sound.

It came, and so close to him that he was almost startled. It was a footstep light and wary.

At a second thought he did not know but that it might be Harry approaching, and he was just on the point of calling him by name when the idea occurred to him that it might be a savage, and that it would be better for him to remain silent.

It chanced that he was standing close to the trunk of a tree, and he knew thereby that he had the advantage of whoever might be approaching.

He would not be perceived so readily in the darkness as if he were standing alone.

Again the slight sound was repeated, this time closer than before.

Straining his eyes, he at last perceived the outlines of a human form creeping stealthily toward where he stood. Its outlines and motions told him that it was not his missing companion.

Harry would never approach the spot after what had been agreed upon between them in such a way as this.

A moment longer and all suspense was ended. The shadowy form was unmistakably that of a savage.

Nearer and nearer he crept, until at last he was so close that Luke could see that he held his tomahawk in his hand, ready to deal his victim a blow the moment he should set eyes on him.

It was evident to the scout that as yet he had not been perceived.

This he saw at once gave him the advantage, and, drawing his knife, he prepared to avail himself of it.

The savage was so close that by reaching out his arm he could almost touch him from where he stood. The moment for him to act had come.

Holding his knife firmly in his right hand, he bounded upon him with a spring like that of a panther.

With his left hand he caught the savage by the throat and held him as in a vice.

It spite of all his wariness the savage was taken completely by surprise, and the scout had him at his mercy.

But mercy was not in the heart of Luke Hawkins. At that moment he even forgot the missing Harry.

His thoughts were of his own slain ones, and his ruling desire to avenge them with the death of every savage that crossed his path.

Another victim was now in his grasp to add to the long roll of those that had already fallen—another blow to be struck to avenge those who had been so dear to his heart.

With all the strength he could command he sent the knife home to the heart of the savage, and the scout felt the warm blood gush out upon his hands.

Casting the body from him, he gazed down upon it with feelings of almost savage joy. Another one was numbered among those whom he had sworn to slay.

So sudden and swift had been the blow that the redskin had had no time to cry out or utter a sound which could be heard ten paces from the spot.

The feelings that animated the heart of Luke were gone in a little time, and then the situation of affairs came back in full force to his mind.

That some harm had come to Harry he was more strongly convinced than he had been before the advent of the savage.

That the young man was either slain or a prisoner he had no doubt.

For a few moments he stood revolving in his mind what he had better do.

Should he turn back and endeavour to get a glimpse of what was going on about the camp-fire, or had he better seek still farther for Harry? He decided at length upon the latter.

He would at least try to find the spot where they had separated, and see what would be there disclosed. Perhaps there would be no need of seeking farther. Even now the young man might be lying there, fast growing cold in the embrace of death.

Decided in his mind upon this course, the scout directed his steps in that direction, and by something that seemed almost instinct they brought him to the exact spot.

He recognized it at once, despite the darkness, and, half dreading what he might find, he looked about him. But no clue was to be found of him he sought.

(To be continued.)

THE tunnel of the Col de Tende has been commenced at both ends simultaneously; the rock is found to be unusually hard, and it is feared that the piercements will present great difficulties.

AN AWKWARD EXPLOSION.—An extraordinary accident has just occurred in the Rue St. Honoré. A man was walking quietly along smoking his cigar behind a man who was hawking about a bundle of those little red balloons which are the delight of the rising generation, when a puff of wind suddenly drove the indiarubber bags against the cigar, and all exploded. The poor smoker was suddenly enveloped in a mass of flame, which burned off his big moustache and beard and singed his face.

THE VASE OF MANTUA.—A telegram from Geneva states that the famous onyx vase, called the "Vase of Mantua," has at last been found in the treasure chest of the late Duke of Brunswick. It was enclosed in another vase of gold metal. The

material and workmanship of this onyx vase make the article a veritable masterpiece. The treasure is considered by antiquaries as a Semitic production, nothing less than the holy vial destined for the consecration of the Hebrew kings.

## THE HEIRESS OF CLANRONALD.

### CHAPTER XXIX.

In less than ten minutes Eustace was in the ball-room.

What a marvellous change! The great drawing-rooms, with their shimmering, silken hangings, the flashing chandeliers, the green and bloom of tropical plants glowing through a fairy vista of brilliant light, the flash of jewels, the rustle of costly silks, the murmur of happy voices, and the throbbing melody of a waltz, mingling with the rhythmic fall of dancing feet!

What a change! All that dreadful horror and darkness and death outside must have been a hideous dream! How could it be anything else?

Sir Eustace put his hand to his head, as if to assure himself he was really awake. Then he turned to look for his mother.

There she sat, in a chair of state, by the side of the haughty old duchess—proud, calm and imperial in her high-bred beauty, not a tremor on her comely face, her rich robe and priceless jewels all in the most perfect order.

Sir Eustace stared in utter amazement. Assuredly he had been dreaming! He must get out somehow, and assure himself that there was no dead face lying out yonder under the starlight.

But his lady mother's serene blue eyes caught sight of him, and, as if divining his intention, she motioned him to her side. He went like one under the influence of a weird spell.

"My dear boy," cried Lady Laura, gaily, "what is it? Such a scowling brow! And it is so ill-bred for a ball-room! For shame, Eustace! Don't you see Lady Mary in the recess yonder, without a partner, and the waltz will strike up in five minutes? What can she think of you?"

Sir Eustace turned and looked at her, and their eyes met in one swift flash of warning intelligence. The young man felt as if he should fall where he stood, but his mother tapped him lightly with her jewelled fan.

"Go," she continued, significantly, "go to Lady Mary—" adding, just above her breath, "you have a secret too—the Earl of Shaftonsbury knows. Go, I say!"

The young baronet obeyed without a word, his lips white with some strong emotion as he crossed the brilliant room.

The earl passed him, with May on his arm, and nodded familiarly, but Sir Eustace did not return the salutation.

"Curse him," he muttered, inaudibly; "the old dotard has been prating of that old affair—I'll pay him off for it."

For an instant the rage in his eyes made them lurid, but they were clear and smiling when he reached the recess where Lady Mary stood.

She turned to meet him, a tall and stately woman, not a beauty, for her features were aquiline, and her eyes cruelly cold, but she was a peer's daughter and an heiress.

"Will you grant me the honour of this waltz?" asked the baronet, bowing profoundly.

Lady Mary arched her brows, and consulted her elegant tablets.

"You should have been here before," she replied, a trifle severely; "my tablets are quite filled up, I give this waltz to the earl—but I might disregard his claims, I suppose. But tell me first where you've been to-night. I was on the balcony and saw you coming up from the garden with such a face! Did you see a ghost, Sir Eustace?"

Sir Eustace turned pale perceptibly, and glanced toward the gloomy garden with an ill-repressed shudder.

"I think I must have seen one," he replied, with an uneasy laugh.

Lady Mary gave him a sharp glance. She was a distrustful, jealous-minded woman.

"I won't have you masquerading about in such a mysterious manner," she said, lightly, but with a covert sneer. "Without doubt you had tryst with some apple-cheeked peasant girl, and I awaiting your coming! It won't do, Sir Eustace! Another such offence and I shall return this bauble."

She touched a glittering diamond ring on her white finger as she spoke, the pledge of her engagement to the young baronet. They had been plighted for years, and the time appointed for the wedding was drawing near.

A sharp retort rose to Sir Eustace's lips, but he choked it down, and with it the aversion he felt for this stately, blue-blooded, sharp-featured peeress, who was to be his wife. She would make him Lord

of Chetwood Heath, and bring him a dowry of ten thousand per annum; and Sir Eustace was too keenly alive to his own interest to hazard the loss of a title and a fortune.

He took the fair, patrician hand in his own, and pressed it fondly for answer.

"Don't be childish, Lady Mary," he said. "You have drawn on your imagination for all your facts. Come, we are good friends now, and there's our waltz."

He took her in his arms, tall and proud, and robed like a queen, and away they whirled, her perfumed, pale-gold hair streaming across his breast, her cold eyes softening into something like tenderness as they looked up into his handsome face; for the Lady of Chetwood Heath was in love with her affianced husband.

But Sir Eustace moved through the dance like an automaton, unconscious of the jewelled arms that clasped him, the pale-gold hair that brushed his cheek, deaf to the throbbing music, blind to the flashing chandeliers, the high-bred women, with only one awful, awful image before his eyes, a white, dead face looking up to the midnight stars.

He thought the ball would never end, and in his craven fear he dared not leave one instant; he scarcely ventured to glance towards the garden. But he must know, he must assure himself that she was still lying there, stark and dead as he had left her, or he should go mad.

In his suspense and horror, all the more unendurable since he was forced to hide it with a mask of smiles, he hated his mother, and shuddered with repulsion as he saw her moving about in her imperial serenity. He even experienced a fierce desire to see her punished and degraded as her terrible guilt deserved.

And thus the hours dragged by, and at last, when the rosy dawn was beginning to reddens far away beyond the London spires, the ball of the duchess came to an end.

Miss Ryhope had made her début, and her auspices were brilliant. The Earl of Shaftonsbury was ready to make her his wife and to decorate her fair young brow with the coronet of a countess.

The London world congratulated Miss Ryhope, and Miss Ryhope congratulated herself, not because of her brilliant prospects, however, but for the absurd and silly fact that she had enjoyed one round dance, one blissful, unaristocratic country dance with that immense young Squire Renshawe, and wore in the corsage of her ball-dress a moss-rose bud, which the silly fellow had brought all the way from Durham.

But the ball was at an end, and Lord Shaftonsbury was assisting her into the Ryhope carriage, where her mother already awaited her. She dare not refuse his attention, under the calm, blue light of Lady Ryhope's eyes, but the six-foot young squire, though an excessively modest man in regard to ladies, stood in no awe of titles, and considered no blood a whit better than that which flowed in his own veins. He made his way through the crowd till he reached the Ryhope carriage, and, towering high above the florid little earl, extended his hand to bid the young débutante farewell.

"Good bye, Miss Ryhope. I return to Durham by the 5.30 train, but I shall be in London again in the course of a week, and will bring you news from Ryhope."

May gave him her hand with a shy, sweet smile and a nod of her curly head. Then the elegant carriage whirled away, but not until Diok Renshawe had caught sight of his rosebud amid Miss Ryhope's priceless laces, and the great, loyal-hearted fellow went his way so thrilled with a delicious hope that he took no note of Lord Shaftonsbury's savage anger.

Meanwhile Sir Eustace, in an agony of feverish impatience, had no sooner seen his affianced bride ensconced amid her velvet cushions than he tore himself away and fled with noiseless steps in the direction of the garden.

The lamps were burning low, the sky was clouded over, and an April rain was plashing softly on the rustling foliage overhead. Was it beating on that pallid face?

Sir Eustace asked himself the question, and his very breath stopped. A great awe possessed him. He glanced toward the dim gloom before him with a shudder. But he must know, he must!

He darted through the tangled vines, panting with terror lest he should be seen, and reached the spot—the little, grassy ridge, near the gate, where he had left Daisy lying so still and cold. But she was gone!

### CHAPTER XXX.

LADY RYHOPE and her son met at the breakfast-table on the following morning. Her ladyship's face had lost something of its imperial calm, but in the trying light of a clear, sunny morning it wore a haggard, anxious look, and her eyes roved in every direction, persistently avoiding her son's face.



There were guests at the table, and they took their wonted places with well-bred dignity, and the tempting food was dispensed, and conversation flowed in a pleasant, rippling stream, and no one suspected aught of the terrible suspense and fear that thrilled the hidden heart of the proud hostess.

She watched the door with covert glances, her very soul in dread of a momentary announcement of the event which must sooner or later come to light; and Sir Eustace, toying with his chocolate-cup, watched her with lowering, suspicious glances.

In the midst of this the door that led into the green-house was thrown wide open, and May came dancing in, her flossy curls all in a flutter. She paused in the centre of the room, glancing inquiringly around.

"Why, isn't Daisy here?" she cried. "I have sought her everywhere, and was sure to find her here! Mamma, where is she?"

Lady Ryhope's lips whitened, and she made several ineffectual attempts to speak before the words could be uttered.

"I've not seen her this morning, my dear," she replied, at last, in a strange, unnatural voice; "she's gone for a walk perhaps."

But May was watching her mother's changing face.

"Why, what's the matter, mamma?" she asked, impetuously. "Why do you look so strange? Has anything happened to Daisy?"

Lady Ryhope reddened with anger.

"Don't stand there and question me in that way, May," she said, severely. "Am I Miss Doon's keeper? How should I know where she is?"

"Well, I'll find out," retorted Miss Ryhope, and she left the breakfast-parlour and went in search of Matihl, from whom she learned, to her infinite surprise, that Miss Doon went out the night before and had not yet returned.

Meanwhile, breakfast over, Lady Ryhope went straight to her own private boudoir, and her son followed in her steps. She was locking the door in his face, but he pushed it open with a determined movement.

"Now, Lady Ryhope," he said, closing the door behind him, and confronting his mother, "I want to know where Miss Doon is!"

The unhappy woman whitened to a deadly pallor, and began to stammer an incoherent answer; but the baronet caught her wrist in a fierce grasp.

"You murdered her!" he hissed, in a terrible sibilant whisper. "I saw you sift the poison into the water from a silver box, and then you made her drink it. She died," he went on, his eyes growing lurid, "an awful death of pain and agony, and I left her dead and rigid on the grass. I went back after the ball, and she was gone! Woman! murderer! tell me what you have done with her, or, by Heaven, the whole world shall know what you have done!"

Lady Ryhope dropped into a seat, and covered her face with her hands. To be accused and denounced by the son she loved was a bitter, bitter punishment.

"Speak!" he went on. "I loved her! You knew it, and you've killed her! Tell me what you have done with her!"

"I don't know—I didn't know she had gone," stammered his mother.

"It is false! you base, heartless woman! You are skilled in deadly drugs—did you not sift a little into the late baronet's cup? Is that why he comes back, like Hamlet's ghost?"

"Eustace, have you no mercy?" wailed the miserable woman.

"Mercy!" he scoffed. "You deserve mercy, don't you? Tell me where the murdered girl is! Speak! or I'll denounce you, if you are my mother. Speak, I say!"

Lady Ryhope rose to her feet, thrilled by a sudden resolve—all her fear gone, her cruel eyes blazing.

"I have answered you," she replied, with dignity. "I know nothing of Miss Doon. I never saw her after I left her with you. What did you do with her?"

"Who knows but what you put the poison in her cup? Young man, have a care! I may turn the tables on you. And there's a secret of yours in my keeping. Do you remember Adèle? Lord Shaftonsbury knows. Have a care, Sir Eustace!"

The baronet made a motion as if he would strike her down where she stood, but by a great effort he restrained himself.

"Curse you!" he muttered, under his breath, as he strode from the boudoir—"curse you, and Shaftonsbury too! I'll pay you both for this!"

He strode straight out of the house, and ordered his horse to be brought round; and while he waited on the balcony, striding up and down impatiently, the Earl of Shaftonsbury appeared—so eager in his devotion to pretty Miss Ryhope that he came at an unpardonably early hour.

The weird sisters could not have devised a more inopportune meeting. The young baronet was hot with passion, and the old earl was hot with wine. Sir Eustace confronted him with a savage scowl.

"How is it, sir," he demanded, insolently, "that you have dared to blab of my affairs?"

The earl stared an instant, and then broke into a provoking laugh.

"Dared!" he repeated, scornfully, his florid cheeks growing a shade deeper. "It doesn't strike me there's any very dangerous risk, even if I do blab, as you express it."

"Doesn't it?" stormed the baronet. "Don't mistake—there's more risk than you think. I see your drift, my lord. We agreed to let that little affair rest—you know we did—and gentlemen are in the habit of keeping their word; but all peers are not gentlemen, it appears."

"Have a care, young man!" interrupted the earl, his face beginning to pale with rising anger.

"Have a care of what?" roared Sir Eustace. "You don't suppose I'm in any fear of you, I hope? As I said, I see your drift. You want to marry my sister, and, in order to enlist my lady mother's co-operation, you have betrayed my secret. You think now to frighten her into terms by threatening to ruin her only son. That's your plan, my lord."

The earl stood in sullen and silent anger.

"But let me tell you," Sir Eustace went on, growing more and more excited, "that I propose taking the matter into my own hands. My sister shall not be sacrificed. She detests you with all her heart, and she shall never be your wife. Now do your worst—I defy you!"

"I will do it—by Heaven I will!" returned the earl, black with passion. "The world shall know the story of poor Adèle! Lady Mary Stanhope shall know it, and that pretty black-eyed girl you are trying to lure to her ruin shall know it too. Your pretty little love games are at an end, my baronet!"

"Curse you," hissed Sir Eustace, darting upon him, "do you want me to murder you? Do you dare to breathe one word of that old story, and I'll wipe out the insult in your heart's blood! I will, now mark my word, my lord!"

"Pshaw! I've listened to boys' threats before," ejaculated the earl, turning on his heel and walking off in the direction of Lady Ryhope's drawing-room; while the baronet, catching sight of his horse below, ran down the steps, and, vaulting into the saddle, went off like a whirlwind.

#### CHAPTER XXXI.

LADY RYHOPE rang for Tulip on the day following the one upon which our last chapter closes.

Her ladyship's face was fast losing its beauty, and her blue eyes had a restless, hunted look that it was not pleasant to see. The terrible event of that memorable night haunted her like a ghost. Sleeping or waking, the accusing face of the girl she had poisoned was continually before her eyes.

Where was she? Had she really succeeded in her terrible purpose, and murdered her? If so, what had become of her body? The awful mystery, the wearing suspense consumed the proud Lady of Ryhope like a secret disease.

She must know the truth or go mad.

She ordered her carriage, and drove to Clydesdale House, and under some flimsy pretext gained access to the garden, hoping foolishly enough to find some clue that might lead her out of the awful night of mystery.

With a palpitating heart she directed her steps toward the eastern fountain. There stood Undine with her silver tresses, and there was the rustic bench upon which Daisy sat, and a few feet off, where it rolled when Lady Ryhope let it fall in her afflict, lay the silver drinking-cup which had contained the fatal draught.

Lady Ryhope uttered a low cry of horror. What a proof of her crime! She darted forward, and, catching up the cup, concealed it beneath her mantle.

A rustling, stealthy step, and an exultant voice speaking in her very ear, startled her beyond all expression.

"My lady," it said, "the wizard's powder works well—will you have another box?"

She turned and met the weird sorcerer face to face, his little bead-black eyes glaring on her like points of flame.

For an instant she stood rooted to the spot, and then her temper began to rise. Who or what was it that dared to follow her in this manner? A sudden heat rose to her white cheeks, and the old Pevensy blood flashed in her blue eyes.

"Don't come one step nearer!" she cried, recoiling from him; "you hideous creature, what are you—the arch-fiend himself?"

The wizard broke into an exultant chuckle.

"Not quite that, my lady," he replied, with a horrible grin. "You do me too much honour. I am only one of the servants of his highness, the arch-fiend; and your ladyship's good angel, familiar Mephistopheles, all in one. Nay, do not scowl in that way, it spoils your comely face, and it's ungrateful. I've served you several good turns, and you should treat me civilly, at least."

Something in his parchment-like face and fiery eyes thrilled Lady Ryhope with fear. The angry heat left her face, and it grew cold and pallid.

"What do you want?" she stammered. "Why do you intrude yourself on me?"

"Why, to serve your ladyship—what else? I wasn't sure but you'd be in need of another box," tapping the pouch that hung from his girdle with a significant grin. "The other two did you good service, now, didn't they?"

Lady Laura began to tremble like an aspen.

"Go away! go away!" she almost shrieked, turning to leave the garden.

But the wizard intercepted her, and laid his skinny hand on her arm.

"Nay, my pretty lady," he continued, "that's not fair. You wouldn't give me the cold shoulder now that you've done with me. See what I did for you—two as neat jobs as any one need ask for. You packed Sir Roger away snug enough, and that pretty, dark-eyed creature that stood between you—"

"Hush!" gasped the miserable woman, breaking away from his hold. "You are the fiend, and you've tempted me to work my own ruin. Go!"

But the creature did not move. He extended his skeleton hand.

"I want my pay first," he said, his small eyes full of impudent defiance. "Fine ladies that have secrets can afford to pay for the keeping; and even a wizard like me has need of gold."

She took out her purse without a word, and threw it at his feet.

He snatched it up, eyeing the glittering gold it contained with disgusting greed.

"Now," he said, concealing it in his bosom, and lifting his crutch, "whenever you want another box you know where to apply. Convenient things to have, these queer little boxes. "But," he added, glancing over his shoulder with a look of wicked significance, "you didn't give Sir Roger quite enough, my lady. He will come back, the ill-bred baronet. He prowls about continually! You'd do well to go down to Ryhope Church, and see for yourself whether or not he lies under the marble stone where you put him. The dead wake up sometimes!"

Lady Ryhope threw out both hands with a terrible shriek which reached the balcony where the duchess and her friends were sitting and brought them in a mass to the Undine fountain.

They found her ladyship almost lifeless, cowering down and covering her face with her hands. It was a sudden attack, she explained, when she had revived enough to speak, she was subject to such attacks—it was her nervous system, her physician said.

The old duchess looked grave enough, but she said nothing, and the dead baronet's wife was soothed and revived, and placed in her grand carriage and driven home to her elegant mansion.

She locked herself in her own apartments for a day and a night and then she rang for Tulip.

The faithful waiting-woman started at sight of her lady's changed face, but she was a well-trained lady's maid, and no word of the surprise she felt escaped her lips.

"Tulip," said Lady Ryhope, "I want you to pack my dressing-case with a few needful changes, and be ready to accompany me to Ryhope by the 11.30 train."

Tulip bit her lip hard to keep down the cry of surprise that had well nigh escaped her.

"Yes, my lady," she answered, quietly.

"And now you may bring me a cup of chocolate and tell the housekeeper I want to see her before I go."

Tulip obeyed, and at half-past eleven the housekeeper had received her instructions and Lady Ryhope, with her grave waiting woman beside her, was steaming out from busy London on her way to Ryhope Manor, but the object or motive that carried her not one of her household knew.

Lady Ryhope and her maid reached the Ryhope Station towards the close of a wet April day. A disagreeable day it had been, with low, trailing clouds and sudden gusts of wind and rain.

The little station, after the fashion of such places, was a miserably forlorn place at best, and the gray skies and smoky mist and black, sodden field made it infinitely worse. Her ladyship had sent on no intelligence of her sudden coming, consequently there was no conveyance to take her to the Manor, and, in spite of Tulip's entreaties, she expressed her determination to walk.

Very white and cold and determined my Lady Ryhope looked as she plodded along the slippery path, with the chill, spring rain beating upon her handsome travelling robes. Tulip felt a kind of awe as she glanced covertly at her face and puzzled her brain to find out what this freakish trip portended.

Half-way to the Manor, and a short space below the chapel, stood an unpretending cottage occupied by Mr. Overbury, the Ryhope sexton. When they approached the gate leading into this place Lady Ryhope paused, and laid her hand on the latch.

"I'm going in here, Tulip," she said. "I wish to see the sexton."

Tulip followed in utter amazement. The old man was at his supper, with his wife and little ones around him, when Lady Ryhope, tall and stately, appeared in the doorway. He started to his feet as if he had seen a ghost.

"Good gracious me!" he ejaculated, throwing up both hands, "be I dreamin' or no? Is it Lady Ryhope?"

"It is Lady Ryhope, Mr. Overbury," replied her ladyship, serenely. "I have come to the Manor on important business, and I desire to see you for a few moments, if you please."

"Me? your ladyship! me did you say? Why, bless my soul, I'd no expectations o' sich an honour," cried the sexton, flattered and startled by turns. "Won't your ladyship take a seat near the fire? 'Tis chill these spring evenings, the damp goes to one's bones—and mebbe you'd honour us to drink a cup o' tea, as would warm ye up a bit, begging your ladyship's pardon?"

"I will take a cup of tea, if you please," replied her ladyship, as she accepted the proffered seat, more with a view to conciliate the sexton and his wife than because she had any craving for the beverage.

The sexton's wife, who had withdrawn to a remote corner, and stood there in breathless awe since the moment of her ladyship's entrance, now darted forward with such eager alacrity that she ran over a small specimen of white-haired humanity that had taken refuge under one side of the table, causing said specimen to so far forget itself as to yell most lustily.

"Tut, tut," cried the sexton, in a rage, "this won't do—git out wi' you, you howlin' pack, why, you'll frighten her ladyship out o' her appetite—and, Melissa," to his trembling better half, "bestir yourself, and don't keep her ladyship awaitin'."

Melissa did bestir herself, and Lady Ryhope sipped her tea, and nibbled a morsel of toast to the infinite gratification of the worthy couple.

"And now," she said, setting down her cup, "I want to see you privately for a few minutes, if you please, Mr. Overbury."

The sexton began to tremble, and he cried out, with alacrity:

"Melissa! Lady Ryhope wants to see me private—go out to the kitchen, you and the children."

His wife obeyed, hurrying her children into the next apartment, but she returned to the door on tip-toe and applied her ear to the keyhole.

The little sexton stood like a culprit awaiting his doom, his knees fairly shaking under him.

"Mr. Overbury," said her ladyship, her voice a trifle unsteady, and a livid ring encircling her lips, "I—I want to take—I mean, I intend—oh, it affects me so to speak of it," she added, gasping for breath, and locking her hands together till the nails dug into the delicate flesh; but I have come to Ryhope, Mr. Overbury, to open Sir Roger's grave."

The sexton bounded from his seat as if a bullet had struck him.

"What for, my lady?" he ejaculated, his face fairly livid, "what for?"

"I don't care to be questioned about it, Mr. Overbury," replied her ladyship, with dignity; "I desire to do it—my reason doesn't concern you—but I want you to help me, and I will pay you a liberal price."

"I can't, my lady, I can't!" he burst out, with passionate excitement; "and don't you do it—it's had luck to meddle wi' the dead. My lady, don't do it—take my advice and give it up."

Lady Ryhope started. The man's excitement puzzled her.

"Why should you care so?" she questioned; "it doesn't concern you, and you'll get your pay."

"Me, my lady! No, no—in course it don't concern me! How should it concern me? I know nothing about Sir Roger since they buried him under the marble stone. Who says I do?"

"Why, no one says so, Mr. Overbury. Don't excite yours if, I beg. I wish to have my—the baronet disinterred for a very short time, and I shall look to you for help. I don't want the matter made public at all, and I prefer that it should be done at night—I should be glad if it could be done to-night. Do you think you can arrange it for me? I will give you fifty pounds if you will."

The man seemed to be seized with an ague fit, his knees shook under him and his teeth chattered.

"For Heaven's sake, my lady!" he implored, "give it up. Don't meddle wi' the dead—you'll repent it if you do."

"Why, what's the matter with you?" cried Lady Ryhope, with rising anger. "You tremble like a culprit. Will you help me in this matter? My mind is made up. I did not come all the way from London to forego my purpose in the end. I offer you a hundred pounds if you will do what I ask, and keep the matter secret; if you refuse I shall get some one else. What do you say?"

"A hundred pounds!" muttered the sexton, under his breath. Then he continued aloud: "I'll do it, if your ladyship's bent on having the job done—I'll do it. I was only anxious to spare your ladyship the pain."

"Will you do it to-night?"

"As well to-night as any other night. We shan't need no help, and we can go to the chapel as soon as everything's quiet."

"Very well. In that case, if you'll be hospitable enough to allow me, I'll remain where I am, and not go to the Manor to-night."

"I'm sure your ladyship's welcome a thousand times," replied the sexton; "an' it's us that feel honoured at havin' your ladyship under our poor roof. An' now, if your ladyship will be good enough to lie down here and rest a bit, your maid can drink her tea, and I'll run out and make my arrangements."

Lady Ryhope crossed the room, and lay down on the little chintz-covered couch, burying her face in the cushions; and Tulip, sipping her tea and listening to the gusty spring winds without, shivered in spite of herself.

By nine o'clock all Ryhope was in-doors, and, for the most part, in bed, for the night was stormy; and even on the fairest of nights the people who inhabited this little town on the Wear were not given to late hours.

(To be continued.)

## WHO IS HE?

By the Author of "Lord Dane's Error," etc., etc.

### CHAPTER XIII.

No one is so accursed by fate,  
No one so utterly desolate,  
But some heart, though unknown,  
Responds unto his own.

Longfellow.

THE story ran in this fashion. The impostor claimed that he had lain down in the boat—which was missing the night of the true Maurice's disappearance—that he had fallen asleep there, and waked to find that it was midnight, and he drifted far out to sea—how far he knew not. He had no oars, and when morning came was picked up by a vessel bound for Australia.

Meeting no home-sailing ship, he had been compelled to go with them. The vessel had been wrecked, and he, after drifting again two days upon a raft with one other man, had been picked up with this man by Algerian pirates and sold into the worst of slavery among the barbarians of Northern Africa.

Thence, after nearly six years, he had contrived to effect his escape. His comrade had died under his sufferings, not however before he had written out an account of their perils, which narrative Sarive had in his possession.

There was a document from an English Consul who had been cognizant of some of the particulars of this marvellous but cleverly got-up tale. There were the affidavits of several sailors who had been in the vessels which had picked him up, etc.: very much such an array of testimony as would be likely to be needed, and well got up on the whole.

Lord Champion ran through most of it with the lawyer's assistance, and Lady Isabel sat by with her pale little hands still pressed to her temples, and her lovely brows wrinkled with pain or perplexity, who could tell?

Lord Champion rose at last from the lawyer's side.

"It's a very clever lot of papers, Mr. Shrive—does whoever got them up immense credit," he said, loud enough for those in the library to hear him. "The most remarkable feature of the whole affair is that a man who had no reason to suppose his identity would be even questioned should have the forethought to provide such elaborate proofs of who he was. Six years ought not to alter a man so that his own wife could not recognise him. No, Mr. Shrive, your case is full of flaws yet to my mind. You may prove it in law, but you never will in common sense. It stands to reason that a wife would know her own husband, and to attempt to palm off upon any woman a counterfeit is so monstrous an outrage upon decency and humanity that I cannot conceive how you or any other man could be brought to lend it a hand."

"Pardon me, my lord," responded Mr. Shrive. "You must have seen for yourself that this unhappy lady is in no condition to pronounce upon her husband's identity."

"She knows me and Sir Robert and all her friends and her boy here. She worshipped her husband, I have been told, and do not doubt. Why should she have forgotten him? You and Sir Robert and others of that impostor's espousers have more than insinuated that this lady's mind had been affected by her long grief. The thought was never hinted till this man came and she refused to recognize him."

"I have been told, my lord, on the best of autho-

rity, that she did recognize him at first. It was the shock of seeing him alive whom she had long supposed dead that upset her."

"Then you have been wrongly informed, Mr. Shrive. I have already questioned Lady Isabel's maid, who was in an adjoining room with the door open and only a silk curtain between her and that interview. She tells me that her mistress denied the man from the first."

"The girl may speak falsely, but if she tells the truth it proves nothing. Look at my lady and tell me if you consider her in her right mind."

There is magnetism in a glance sometimes, even though it is not directly met.

As Lord Champion bent his gaze upon her, as the lawyer's small, bright, mouse-coloured eyes turned upon her face, Lady Isabel raised her head, and looked from one to the other with such an intense and piercing glance, her black eye shot such a ray of fiery lustre, that the lawyer shrank involuntarily, and the hue of conscious guilt overspread his wizen little face.

"Lady Isabel," said the earl, gently, "what is the matter with you? Are you not feeling well?"

"I am feeling very ill, my lord," the pale lady answered, in the slow and laboured way in which she had spoken before.

Each word she seemed to drag forth with the utmost difficulty.

"How ill, my lady—in your head?"

"In my head, my lord. My brain is clouded. It seems numb. I believe I have been drugged."

Lord Champion started violently, while Shrive did his best to look impassive, while he was growling inwardly that "the job hadn't been half done in his opinion."

The earl looked at him sharply a moment.

Shrive coughed uneasily.

"Insane people take every sort of whim in their heads, my lord, you ought to know that," he said.

"I don't think this is a whim, Mr. Shrive—I believe it is truth; and, by Heaven, sir, if it is, you and your gang shall pay the penalty, if there is law in England!"

The earl spoke in terrible excitement.

Mr. Shrive looked the colour of his handkerchief.

"I assure you, my lord, there is positively nothing of the kind," he breathed, huskily.

Lady Isabel touched the earl's arm.

"My lord, I am very hungry."

Lord Champion looked at her almost wildly.

"Hungry?" he repeated.

Shrive rose.

"Permit me, my lord."

He crossed the room, and called to a servant to bring a waiter of refreshments from the saloon opposite.

"I have eaten almost nothing for three days," Lady Isabel whispered to his lordship.

Lord Champion could only stare. He began to wonder if my lady was not losing her mind.

The servant came in a moment with the waiter of food Shrive had ordered.

Lady Isabel reached for a piece of pigeon pie with fingers that shook with weakness and eagerness. She ate indeed like a famished woman or a crazy one.

His lordship gazed in mingled horror and bewilderment.

Lady Isabel looked up after a little with some tears in her beautiful eyes.

"Pardon, my lord, but if you be ever as hungry as I am, you will know how good this tastes."

Shrive had his back to them. He was staring industriously at the prospect from the window and anathematizing the whole thing as a bad business.

"You had better go home with me, Lady Isabel, and stay till this affair is arranged somehow," Lord Champion said. "Will you?"

"Thanks, my lord. I should be very glad. He and Sir Robert will oppose it."

"That is of no consequence. Will you come into the library with me now, and speak to some of your friends? Do you feel strong enough?"

The lovely eyes darkened.

"They are not my friends. They belong to him."

"I am your friend, and I advise you to go and speak to them, and to try and be as natural as possible. They have been told that you have not full possession of your senses."

A strange contraction crossed the sweet, proud face.

"It is no fault of my enemies that I am not insane," she said. "I will go with you, my lord. Shall I not lead Hugh?"

The boy was still clinging about the peer's neck.

"Mamma, I like to be here," he said, so eagerly that Lord Champion laughed pleasedly, and would not put him down.

His lordship was a bachelor, and the touch of the pretty child's soft, warm cheek, the clinging of his rosy hands was something as sweet as new to him.

As they re-entered the library Lady Cattie Calthorpe came forward to meet them, with both white, jewelled hands outstretched.



Lady Calthorpe, or Lady Cattie, as she was mostly called by her acquaintances, had been and still was a great beauty. She was little, slender and dark, but had a vivid colour on cheek and lips, and two perfect rows of small white teeth that made her smile a very brilliant one. Her eyes were a peculiar, almost disagreeable colour, a greenish gray, but had a charming expression. Her hair was a rich brown and worn fashionable. She always dressed in exquisite taste, and was considered an authority in such matters.

Lady Cattie was a very popular woman with both sexes, but she had a false, mean, treacherous and cruel nature under all that fascinating exterior, and secretly had always hated and envied Lady Isabel, her niece.

Lady Isabel's grandfather had married late in life a second time, and Lady Cattie was the offspring of this marriage. There had been at one time whispers that her mother had been a ballet dancer. Certainly she was of low birth. She lived only a year after the marriage to her lordly, gray-haired lover. Lady Cattie had little of the Champion look in her small dark face.

Lady Isabel spoke with her aunt civilly and passed gracefully among the other guests, calling each by name, addressing to each some trifling words to which the sweet, unspeakably sad voice lent a touching significance, while curious eyes were baffled or rebuked by the lofty self-possession of that wondrously beautiful face.

"The deuce!" muttered Crawley, looking on in scarcely concealed discomposure; "she's all right again. I told you you were too afraid of your dose—you didn't give her half enough."

He was leaning upon Sir Robert's shoulder familiarly, a contact that was peculiarly distasteful to that gentleman for the same reason, but he had to endure it.

"Don't lose your temper again, that's all," answered Sir Robert. "It's a game of wits. The coolest and sharpest will win all—so look out."

"Lord Champion has asked her to go and stay with him for a while," whispered a voice behind the two—"all will be lost if she should once get completely out of your power."

It was Shrive who spoke; he added something in Crawley's very ear at which the look of malevolence and wicked determination darkened in that handsome, evil face.

"All right," he nodded, with a threatening glance towards Lady Isabel. "I'll teach my lady who is master."

Shrive lifted his grizzly brow. He found this client of his rather abrupt and brutal.

"My suggestion was only intended for an extremity," he said—"only for an extremity, Mr. Champion. All harsh measures are to be deprecated, I assure you."

"Mind your own business, will you?" answered Crawley. "You've got charge of the law part of this business, and that is all I remember. You're to be well paid. If Sir Robert and I keep within the law that is all you have to do with it."

The little lawyer did not like the manners of this man, but, as Crawley had said, he was to be well paid for his services, and could afford to submit to rudeness in consequence; but I think he as well as Sir Robert hated this sneering aspirant after Maurice Champion's place.

"Pardon me," the little lawyer said, as politely as the other's manner had been rude. "Sir Robert might perhaps invite her to his house."

"Certainly," Sir Robert answered, approvingly. "I will speak with my wife about it at once."

He passed to Lady Cattie's side and said a few words to her in a low tone.

The two moved toward Lady Isabel arm-in-arm. With a thrill of repugnance Lady Isabel saw them approach.

Lady Cattie made the proposal in her sweetest, most persuasive tones.

Lady Cattie had been a coquette—was yet for that matter—and rumour said that Lord Champion when he had been only plain Richard Maynard, had been one of her conquests.

His lordship looked down at Lady Isabel, his fair, plain face flushing slightly.

"What do you say, Isabel?" he asked. "My house is but bachelor quarters."

"I have accepted your kind invitation, my lord. I am obliged to my aunt and Sir Robert, but I will abide by my first acceptance," Lady Isabel answered, firmly.

Lady Calthorpe laughed.

"But you have surely forgotten, Isabel, Lord Champion is a bachelor. You cannot go to his house—people will talk."

"Let them," quickly responded Lady Isabel. "He has his sister with him."

At this moment Crawley joined the group, a thin gloss of decent courtesy over his displeased and angry looks. His lowering eyes fastened upon Lady Isabel.

"If you go to Champion Rest, Isabel," he said,

in a defiant but low voice, "you go without our boy. He stays with his father."

The insolence of the speech under all the circumstances struck Lord Champion and Lady Isabel white with anger and agitation.

"You villain!" muttered Lord Champion. "You abominable scoundrel!"

Crawley glanced at him with his usual sneer. He meant to keep his temper this time.

Lady Isabel reached her hand through his lordship's arm and touched her child.

"You are a heartless and brutal villain. You are a fiend upon earth if ever there was one," she said, looking at Crawley with flashing eyes and white, drawn lips. "What have I done, I wonder, that I must be haunted and hunted and threatened by anything so evil as you?"

Crawley pretended to sigh, but it was a miserable, hypocritical feint.

"I forgive your language, Isabel, because I feel satisfied, whatever others may think, that you are not yourself. When you return to a rational mind you will not talk in this style. Meanwhile, as I cannot consider you answerable for your own behaviour, or in any sense a responsible person, I shall not permit you to take young Hugh from my guardianship and protection."

"Has he the shadow of authority to interfere with me?" asked Lady Isabel of the earl.

"Certainly not."

"Pardon me, my lord," interposed Shrive, stealing forward. "He has the law on his side and the power. Every servant in the house has acknowledged him, and all are absolutely devoted to him. Maurice Champion was nearly worshipped by his servants long ago. He is no less so now."

"Digby and his wife know better," cried Lady Isabel, impulsively.

The lawyer fixed his small eyes coldly on her passionate face.

"Digby and his wife quitted Kirston Wold three days ago, my lady," he said.

"Where have they gone?" demanded my lady.

"They have been sent away because this impostor dared not have them here."

"They were not sent away. I offered them double wages, Isabel, if they would remain," answered Crawley.

"I don't believe you. You are a treacherous, mercile, deceitful villain. Don't leave me here, Lord Champion, unless you want murder done. Don't let him have my boy, unless you want him killed. They have taken my husband's life, and now they want Hugh's and mine."

Lord Champion glanced down at the convulsed and agitated face.

Thus he did not see the dreadful look, the pitiless and wicked blaze lighted suddenly and then gone again in Crawley's eyes.

The impostor stood with his back to most of the rest, and except a curious ashen hue at the corners of his mouth he showed no emotion at Lady Isabel's strange words by the time Lord Champion lifted his eyes.

Lady Cattie interposed with her honeyed voice, her caressive touch, and blandishing looks.

"Let us all stay at Kirston to-night, my lord," she proposed, boldly. "By morning who knows how differently some of us may look on matters? We will keep as many with us as we can and have a merry time. Kirston is large enough for more than are here now I know."

Sir Robert seconded the proposal. Shrive looked approval, Crawley was silent. Lady Isabel clung to his lordship's arm, nearly hysterical in her excitement and pain.

"I believe you and Hugh are all the friends I have in my own house," she whispered to him, with white lips; "for mercy's sake don't leave me here whatever you do."

"You wouldn't go away without your boy? Nay, forgive me," as her eyes dilated with horror at the question, "I did not mean that. I know you would not. I will stay to-night. You and Hugh both shall go with me when I leave if you wish, law or no law. I do not believe the law is with him to that degree, but it may be."

A portion of the county guests remained also. The others departed in excitement, most of them, if the truth must be told, more in favour of that handsome image of wickedness—Crawley—than over. The county had cast its vote for the impostor—there was no denying it. What the courts would say to his pretensions—if the case went to the courts—it was impossible to guess.

The long, wide drawing-rooms of Kirston—marvels of elegance and magnificence—were thrown open as they had not been since the disappearance of Maurice Champion six years before. Lady Isabel, it has been said, had lived in the strictest seclusion, devoted to her child and the memory of her lost Maurice.

Only the housemaids when they aired these grand rooms and dusted them once a month had looked upon their grandeur since that unhappy time.

Lady Cattie took it upon herself now to have them opened and fires lighted. The immense chandeliers of frosted silver were set ablaze at evening, the piano in the music-room, which opened off the suite of drawing-rooms, was made to lend its tuneful aid to the evening's enjoyment under Esther Mount's skilful touch.

Lady Isabel was there, a feverish light in her brilliant gaze, a nervous restlessness in all her movements, which was the natural result of all she had undergone in the three days past.

She excused herself early and retired with her little boy to her own apartments.

She found, on entering there, Mrs. Craven instead of her own maid.

"Where is Lucy?" she demanded, at once, recoiling from this woman whom she had every reason to regard as part of the cruel conspiracy against her.

"Lucy left Kirston Wold an hour or more ago," the housekeeper answered, avoiding meeting Lady Isabel's eyes.

Mrs. Craven had changed as much as Lady Isabel had—more perhaps. She looked like a stone woman, gray pallor and rigid lines were where all had been colour and expression before. She looked, moved and acted like a wooden woman worked by machinery. Anything more dull and vacant and hopeless than her eyes it would have been hard to find. Anything more mechanical than her movements never was seen except in an automaton.

Lady Isabel was staring at her blankly.

"Lucy gone too," she said, with a shiver; "she must have been a friend to me or they would not have sent her away—Will they send Lord Champion, I wonder? Leave the room, Mrs. Craven; I won't have you here, you viper, at all events."

My lady spoke imperatively, but Mrs. Craven did not move or look at her.

When Lady Isabel compelled her to speak she only said:

"I have my orders to remain here and wait upon you, my lady, in Lucy's place."

"Leave the room," repeated Lady Isabel, catching at the bell cord.

It came away in her hand.

She sat down and covered her face with her hands, while the boy shook his small fists at Mrs. Craven and called her, in his mother's words, "a viper, a bad, wicked viper."

Mrs. Craven went and shut the door, locked it, and removed the key, putting it silently in a pocket in her dress.

Lady Isabel started to her feet again in stormy excitement.

"Unlock that door," she commanded. "How dare you?"

Mrs. Craven did not lift her white eyelashes. Her dull eyes kept their downward gaze. If she had been a machine indeed she could not have looked more unmoved.

Lady Isabel, it seemed, might address herself to the wall with as much chance of being heeded.

"Am I a prisoner in my own rooms again?" Lady Isabel went on. "Dare they do such a thing with Lord Champion in the house? Are you to be my jailer?—you, my paid dependent—your, to whom I have been kind—"

Mrs. Craven's hands flew up to her face. Something like a sob burst forth. Then she went back to the old apathy and stony unconsciousness.

Lady Isabel walked up to her and looked keenly in her face, laying her white hand upon the woman's shoulder.

"Tell me the truth," she said, in a low voice. "What is that bad man to you? What do you know of him?—for that you know something I am very sure."

She neither looked up nor moved, but my lady felt her quiver under her hand.

"You hate him only less than I do. You fear him, and he fears you; yet you serve him. Tell me why, Mrs. Craven, and I will protect you against any consequences of his anger."

Mrs. Craven's white lashes flickered, but she did not lift them. Her rigid lips said, mechanically:

"You are mistaken, my lady. I don't know what you are talking about."

"You do," spoke my lady, in great passion. "You know who this villain is who comes here claiming my lost Maurice's place—you know, and might rid me of his horrible persecutions if you would. If you do not you will live to be sorry, I warn you. I shall never acknowledge his claims, and he may murder me if I do not."

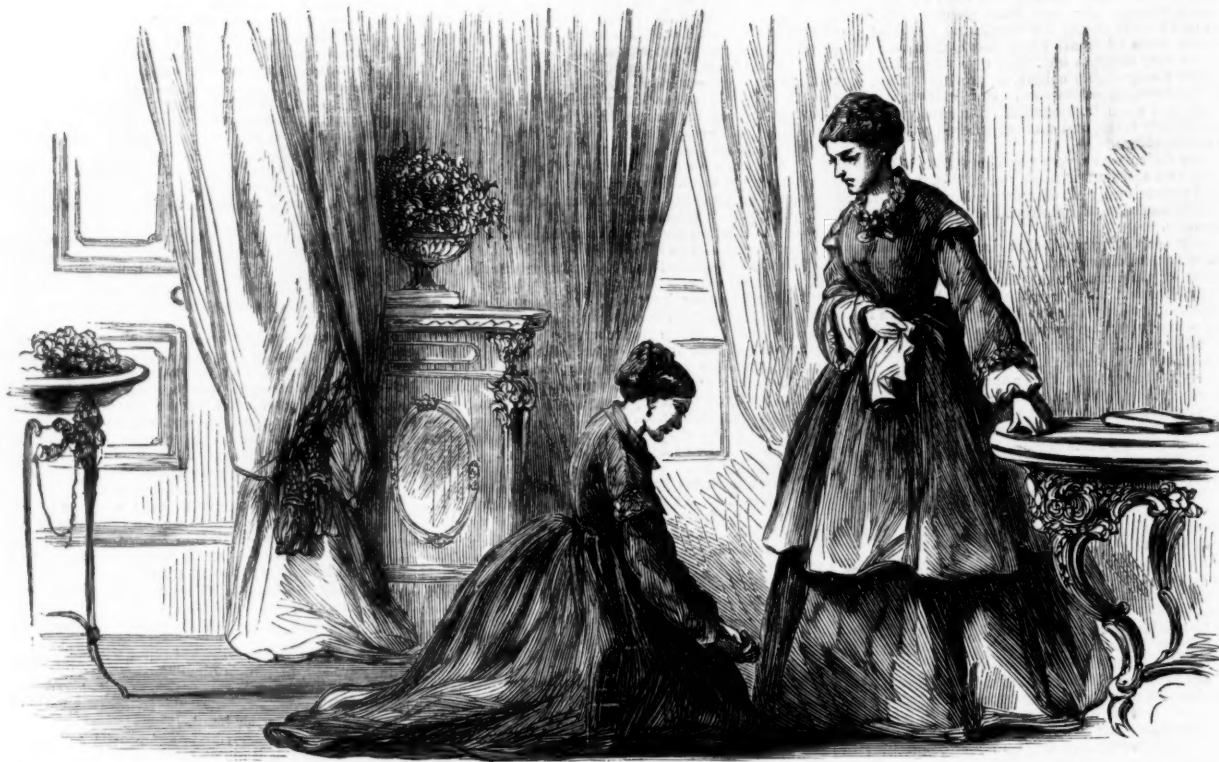
Mrs. Craven drew a long, gasping breath, and to Lady Isabel's surprise a tear rolled down her gray cheek.

She brushed it off with her hand, and moved from under Lady Isabel's touch.

My lady followed her.

"Do you hate me? Do you want him to succeed in his diabolical plans? Would you like to see him reigning at Kirston, and little Hugh and his slaves?"

"My lady, you know I would not."



[MRS. CRAVEN GIVES WAY.]

Mrs. Craven's feelings had got the better of her again. She looked frightened, then tore herself away from Lady Isabel and rushed into the next room.

My lady followed her still, resolved to pursue the advantage she believed she had gained.

"Listen to me," she said, solemnly. "Do you know that in the three days I was locked in here—I, the mistress of Kirston—I had but three meals, and those of a style that a dog never was offered at Kirston before? The last one, when I was famishing, was dragged. I know it. I ate a little, and, hungry as I was, I fancied it tasted strange. I threw the rest away. But it was too late. Half starved as I was, the little I had taken affected my brain, though not as those villains meant it should. They meant to make me out insane and account for my denying that villain on that supposition. I don't suppose there are more than five people in my own drawing-room to-night but that believe I am wrong in my mind as they call it. The five are my enemies, and know to the contrary. Sir Robert and that black-hearted scoundrel, Lady Cattie and Esther Mount, and my own lawyer. Oh, they're a precious lot, and you've joined them. I know you have. But promise me one thing. If my own Maurice come back ever—and I begin to think he may—if you live to see it be sure that you tell him from me that I at least never for one moment believed in this vile pretender who says he is my husband. I shall be dead before he comes, I daresay, and little Hugh too. I hope he'll avenge us, that's all. Will you tell him?"

Mrs. Craven drew another long, gasping breath and then burst into tears. She fell down at Lady Isabel's feet and clung there, her face on the carpet, her form convulsed and shaken from head to foot with agitation.

"My lady, he is a demon," she breathed rather than said. "He is, he is. He'll kill me if he knows I say it—to you too."

Lady Isabel knelt down beside her at once, and put an arm around her.

Hugh began to cry.

"Mamma, I am frightened," he said.

"You are not frightened," said Lady Isabel, looking up at him. "You are a Champion, Hugh, and the Champions fear nothing but Heaven."

"That is true, mamma."

And the pretty, manly boy drew himself up proudly, though the tears stood still in his large, bright eyes.

"Go and sit down in mamma's chair in the other room, and sing to yourself."

"Yes, mamma."

The child went obediently.

Mrs. Craven had stopped her sobbing, but she grovelled still on the carpet.

"Now then tell me," began Lady Isabel.

"I'll tell you nothing, my lady—I dare not. He'll murder me for what I've said already. You just tell him and see. He's just the fiend himself; he can do anything. Just let him suspect that I love you more than I'm afraid of him and he'll put me where I can't help you or harm him."

"He shan't find out from me—indeed he shan't," cried my lady, unreasonably elated by Mrs. Craven's confession. "I'll pretend I hate you more than him first. Only tell me one thing. Is my Maurice alive?"

The white-haired housekeeper sat up.

"I don't know, my lady. I suspect he is."

"Why?"

"I heard Sir Robert and him talking."

"What did they say?"

"He was urging Sir Robert to do something—something about you I am sure, and Sir Robert declared he never would, that one thing of that kind was enough for him. 'Ay,' answered he, with a horrible laugh, 'because you didn't give him enough either, the more's the pity. Dead men tell no tales, Sir Robert. Living ones sometimes do.'"

Lady Isabel rose excitedly. But, impulsive as she was, experience had taught her not to jump at conclusions.

Though she would have given her own life to know that her husband lived, she had believed to the contrary too long to rashly be convinced now that he did live.

"If I thought Maurice was alive and these villains knew it I would be willing to serve them in any slavery except a wife's, till I could find in what horrible place they have hidden him," she murmured.

Then, addressing Mrs. Craven in a louder voice: "Go and tell that man—you know his name, I don't—go tell him I want to see him. Stay. Put Hugh in bed first. No, go, go at once and tell him. I'll undress my boy myself while you're gone. Don't you understand me, woman?" for Mrs. Craven stood staring as if she thought her mistress had suddenly gone mad indeed.

"What are you going to do, my lady?"

"I'm not going to tell him a word you've said, at any rate," said my lady, sharply.

"I know that, I know," cried Mrs. Craven, falling on her knees again, "you're going to do something dreadful though, something dreadful for yourself. Oh, my lady, don't—don't trust yourself in his power. He's worse than a wild beast."

The housekeeper went slowly and with ghastly face out of the room.

Much amazed and slightly incredulous was Mr. Crawley when the strange and unlooked-for summons came, but he quitted his seat before the library fire, where he had just come sulkily to smoke, and followed the frightened housekeeper.

The company were still in the drawing-room, making merry.

Crawley made a face as he passed the door.

"Bah!" he hissed, in his spiteful, venomous way. "I hate you all. I'd like it if you had but one neck and I could be hanging to that with two hands till you were black in the face. See here, you jade"—catching up with Mrs. Craven and laying hold of her roughly—"have you been telling my Lady Spitfire anything?"

"You can ask her," answered the housekeeper, shrinking from him, but not daring to make open resistance.

He stopped with an oath.

"If I thought you had—"

He glared at her frightfully.

She saw that he had been drinking, and she knew that, brutal as he was at other times, he was a mad brute when he had been drinking.

"You know I dare not tell her anything about—"

She hesitated, her face growing ghastlier, her very lips turning blue as with cold.

"Exactly about—well, about what?"

"About myself."

Crawley laughed as at a good jest.

But Mrs. Craven shivered again as with an ague, and behind the white lashes her blue eyes had a light of such hatred and fear as might have startled her tyrant if he had seen it.

Suddenly Crawley stopped at the landing opposite Lady Isabel's apartments.

"I won't go any farther till you tell me what she wants."

The housekeeper stopped also, but without looking up.

"I don't know," she said, in her dull, low voice. Crawley swore at her.

"I believe you do."

He looked like a handsome demon as he stood there in his rich evening dress, glowering at her.

In spite of his evil expression that terrible resemblance to Maurice Champion was never more apparent than at this moment.

Lady Isabel, as she opened her door suddenly and stood looking at him, saw it, and a dreadful faintness swept over her, a premonition, as it were, of the evil this man might yet work for her if she persisted in that rash course upon which she had resolved.

(To be continued.)





[THEY MEET.]

## SHIFTING SANDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

*"Elgiva; or, the Gipsy's Curse," "The Snapt Link," "The Lost Coronet," etc., etc.*

## CHAPTER XXVI.

The heart that is soonest awake to the flowers  
Is always the first to be touched by the thorns. Moore.

A wounded spirit who can bear?

THERE was a mutual start of recognition, but certainly less of surprise on the part of Rupert than of the young applicant for aid, whose presence occasioned perhaps a not altogether unexpected rencontre.

The slight shriek on Cora's part was certainly more symptomatic than Rupert's cold and reproachful air when they confronted each other.

"I am not surprised that you are ashamed to see me, Cora," he said, bitterly. "Surely I have some right to control and you may say to blame your actions."

Cora would perhaps have melted more quickly under different treatment.

She was but hardened and indignant at the mode of address which her ci-devant guardian had seen fit to adopt towards her.

"I distinctly deny such a right," she said, coldly. "You did nothing, so far as I know, to buy me for life as your slave."

"When you deserted, cast off my protection, was that nothing for me to blame and consider as simply disgraceful in one so young and dependent?"

Cora gave a scornful smile.

"I shall not justify myself," she said, haughtily; "but leave it to your mother and Adèle to explain it to you, if they choose. But it is enough for me that I am free from every tie. I ask and would receive nothing from you, Mr. Falconer."

"Mr. Falconer!" he repeated. "Then indeed we are but as strangers, Cora. From your early, lisping prattle you never called me by that name. You are indeed changed."

"It is not I who am changed," she said, with emphasis. "The friend of my old days, as I then believed him, is 'Rupert' still."

"Of course I could not compete with a rich old profligate, who deserted his own child for your sake, nor the titled young fellow who was foolish and base enough to risk his life and take away that of the hoary old sinner."

"Peace, peace!" exclaimed Cora, indignantly. "I will not hear my friends thus maligned. If this is all I wish you farewell."

And she hastily turned toward the outer door of the apartment.

But he hastily stepped between her and this exit.

"No, Cora, not so. You shall not leave thus," he said, determinately. "I can hardly believe as evil of you as you would imply. Have you utterly thrown off all natural authority or protectors for the disgraceful course you have adopted?"

"Ask your mother," she said, "ask Mrs. Falconer, who was the first to snap every tie and to liberate me from the protectorship you speak of. She arranged with Mr. Carew—poor, ill-fated Mr. Carew—for the future maintenance of and power over me and my actions. He is gone—dead—and I am therefore free."

"Free to assist and cover the escape of his murderer," he said, angrily; "a worthy liberty truly."

"That is certainly your assumption, not mine," she returned, proudly. "I do not admit its truth, and if it were true I am not accountable; I can do as I am inclined, and you in your turn can cast me off and assist and protect Miss Carew if it happens to accord with your will and fancies."

He looked sharply and eagerly at her.

"Have you been eavesdropping, Cora?"

A vivid colour rushed over her face, but though falsehood never yet stained her lips she was too impetuous to yield to the species of tyranny he seemed inclined to exercise after his treachery to her.

"It matters not," she said, haughtily. "I have told you that your path and mine will be very different henceforward, Mr. Falconer, so all our actions will be independent of each other."

"Then you do not acknowledge any obligation to me for the care I took of you in your early childhood, the love and the thought I expended on your safety and happiness when no one else was concerned for you or willing to lavish such tenderness on you? Cora, can you really be so hard-hearted, so ungrateful?"

There was a complaining sadness in the tone that touched Cora, though she perhaps felt a certain degree of contempt at the idea of such pretensions being advanced as a plea for his coveted power over her.

"Perhaps it was anything but a kindness," she said. "Perhaps it would have been far more merciful to have left me either to die or know no better hopes and tastes than were to be gleaned from the ignorant savages who were my protectors. Any way it is no excuse for your claims now, since I was discarded, made over to the first person who wished to relieve you of the charge. But if thanks are owing I will pay them to the full for the past if the opportunity ever shall come; I will show I am not

ungrateful. Now I must not stay longer. Is this your cottage?" she asked, quickly.

"No, certainly not; you need not ask such a mocking question, Cora," he replied, angrily.

"Then if you will kindly call the owner and ask whether I can have the relief I need I will go at once. If it be refused I must go elsewhere."

"Is it for yourself?" he said, wondering.

"Certainly it is," she replied.

"Then remain and take the refreshment here," he said, firmly.

"I do not choose to do so. It is not my pleasure," she said, indignantly.

"Then there must be some reason for your refusal, which it is very easy to guess," he returned, scornfully; "and it will be equally possible to discover the fugitive from your track. Are you not afraid to defy me, Cora?"

"I do not defy you," she said, calmly, "but I am confident in myself—and in you too, Rupert," she went on, with a sudden change of manner. "If you are not altogether changed, if you have not lost every sense of honour and kindness and pity, you will not press me farther, but let me take my way undisturbed, unmolested," she pleaded, anxiously.

"Do you confess that it is for this criminal, this murderer, that you are begging from strangers?" asked Rupert, sternly.

"I confess nothing, and you must know I am right," said the girl, firmly. "Whatever may be the risk I run I will not bring danger on any other persons, and if they are ignorant no blame can attach to them."

"Would you grieve for me to be injured in any degree, Cora?" he asked, more tenderly.

"You know that I should," she replied, and an involuntary exchange of glances from the eyes of both might have revealed the hidden secrets of their hearts had the mist of prejudice and jealousy not come between their convictions and their inner judgment.

"At least I ought to thank you so far," Rupert replied, coldly. "Give me credit for an equal reluctance for your peril. Let me persuade you to abandon this rash enterprise, whatever it may be. Surely your life should not be sacrificed for a heartless, bloodstained stranger."

"It is different, all different," she said. "I am necessary to no one, dear to no one. You have your mother—Adèle—many to care for you, and no cause for such rashness."

"Cora, you have a cause then! You love this man!" exclaimed Rupert, fiercely.

Cora felt a strange thrill of pleasure through her at the angry look and tone, that betrayed his interest in her feelings and her heart.

"It matters not, but the very idea is folly," she returned, coldly. "Rupert, all I ask is but forbearance on your part, that you will leave me to myself unfettered. I need no help from you, if you will leave me alone and not prevent others from granting me the little help I want to prevent me from actual distress."

"Will you promise me to give up this rash enterprise, to leave this unworthy object of your care?" he said, "and then I will yield to you in my turn."

"I have told you I neither confess nor deny any of your charges," she replied, quietly. "Rupert, you are ungenerous and cruel to speak thus, and I will not satisfy you by one syllable," she went on, more passionately. "Let me go if you are going to debar me from the relief I stooped to beg. I will do without, even if I die in the struggle."

He could scarcely resist this, unless his resentment had been more certainly founded on truth than bare suspicions.

"Then we are to be as strangers, Cora," he said; "with no ties even of implied promises or kindness of feeling to recall early days. You are as beautiful as ever," he went on, bitterly, "but in character and heart how different from the Cora I once thought all my own!"

"Yet for that early memory will you not grant the prayer?" she said, softly. "I would not stoop to make it to any other human being so humbly. Rupert, I would die first."

He could hardly resist the mingling of proud high spirit and more soft and tender flattery of himself, for he well knew that such words from that haughty spirit were in truth the most subtle flattery he could have received.

"You give nothing to my pleading in return," he said, reluctantly; "you will not even say you do not love, that you will not marry this felon."

Cora gave a disdainful gesture and a little laugh escaped her.

"I love!" she said; "what have I to with such a feeling, and for one so far above me as the object of your hatred? Love," she repeated, bitterly; "I hate its very name; it has brought nothing but woe and danger wherever I have known of its existence. Do not speak to me of such folly, Rupert, I am as likely to dream of it as that you would marry Lady Marian Biddulph, the heiress of those broad lands."

He laughed scornfully in his turn.

"You do not say that you would not be ready were it possible, but only that it would be an absurd ambition," he returned, scornfully. "However, you are perhaps right. A nobleman like this unprincipled assassin would scarcely think of an honourable affection for an obscure, unknown girl. But that is very different from what I fear might take place while you expose yourself to his society."

Never did Rupert Falconer forget, even in long after years, the flash of resentful and wounded pride in Cora's beautiful face.

"I can never forgive this—never," she said, choking with the bitter anger that fevered her very blood. "Let me go, I insist. I am not a prisoner. I will not endure such insult."

"No, no, forgive me, Cora," he said, repentingly. "It was but my distrust of him, and you are too innocent, you cannot even dream of the danger you are incurring, but it was no doubt of your purity or your innocence—nay, I will swear it if you will."

But she would not listen. The arrow had struck too far.

She sprang like a gazelle to the door, turned the key with a rapid and almost unnatural strength, and had darted from the cottage and gained some distance in the flight before Rupert had time to follow her swift footsteps.

But he did not give up the pursuit. He ran with as much rapidity as youthful strength and an earnest purpose could induce. But his profession had scarcely fitted him for a lengthened race, though it had taught him to climb, like a monkey, the high and giddy heights of the tallest man-of-war that ever challenged steady head and sure foot.

And Cora was light as a fairy, and moreover had the advantage of knowing every part of the way.

So that each moment distanced the young man in the pursuit, till at last the girl's figure totally disappeared at a sharp turning in the road, and Rupert was baffled when he arrived at the spot by the two paths that led away from it, and in neither of which could he distinguish a vestige of the figure he sought.

He stopped and hesitated. But the choice was at length determined by the fact that a few yards along one of these walks a high mound rose that might well have hidden Cora, even in the brief interval since he lost sight of her.

And along that he rushed, but when he reached the mound in question there was again a blank.

Cora St. Croix had disappeared, and a farther search would be useless, and perhaps lead to his losing his own path among the gloomy mountains.

So, repentant, doubtful, and angry, he returned to the dwelling he had so abruptly quitted.

#### CHAPTER XXVII.

I can no other answer make but thanks,  
And thanks,  
*Shakespeare.*

Cora's heart did certainly throb violently within her when she at last stopped to take breath after that headlong flight.

There seemed only starvation—death—for that unhappy fugitive sufferer and herself. All was the result of Rupert Falconer's cruelty, and the big tears rose in her eyes, rather from that idea than the distress which actual terror occasioned. The idol was falling from the shrine that it had so long occupied.

Rupert's fickleness, his sudden devotion to Netta Carew, his distrust of herself, and his utter heartedness to the fugitive sufferer from that unfortunate dispute combined to cool her blind worship of the benefactor of her childhood.

But the awakening was exquisitely painful, and the more so because Cora was as yet too completely inexperienced to read the workings of the heart and to trace the evil passions to their real source.

But it was a double sorrow that occupied her heart now—thoughts were crowding her mind with bewildering rapidity both as regarded her early love and her unhappy and helpless charge. And in the utter depression of the moment her energies fairly gave way, and she sank down on the green turf and gave vent to a flood of girlish tears.

She could not bear to return to Lord Belfort without the relief she had almost pledged herself to bring to him. And yet he would perhaps suffer more from her prolonged absence than from the disappointment he would endure on her return.

At any rate the sight of her, the sound of her voice would reassure him, ere she should make another attempt to procure necessary provisions for their support.

She hastily dried her eyes, and started up to hasten forward to the quarry.

But scarcely had she resumed her course when a voice was heard calling on her to stop, a request which, in her present state of alarm, rather was calculated to hasten her speed. And yet the tone was unfamiliar to her. It was not Rupert Falconer's, and scarcely that of any one who knew her, for no name was spoken, and the words, when she could more distinctly catch them, were not of a character to cause alarm.

"Young lady! can you tell me the way? I am lost in these solitudes," came gaspingly but distinctly on the clear air.

Cora could not resist such a petition, and pausing for a few moments a young man in a tourist dress, but evidently of the finest and most unexceptionable material, appeared over the neighbouring eminence, and came rapidly towards her. He looked flushed and weary, but still he doffed his wideawake cap, with an instinctive courtesy, to Cora, as he approached.

She could see then that he was perhaps about thirty years old, and with very little pretension to good looks, save such as a certain refinement and good breeding would confer. His voice and gesture bore the same stamp, and gave the girl confidence, in spite of his abrupt address and her unprotected solitude.

"I have lost my way," he said, "very much I believe from my own folly; but I took a fancy to come over this romantic country alone, and sent my servant on by a conveyance. Can you tell me the best way to Biddulph Castle?"

Cora could with difficulty restrain a slight cry. It was such an ill-omened, dangerous meeting to encounter any one connected with that house, who would probably mention the circumstance on arriving at his destination. And for a moment she almost meditated a sudden escape from such a contact.

The gentleman evidently perceived some change in her lovely face, for he resumed, with some concern in his tone:

"I fear you are ill, or have I startled you by my abruptness?"

"I am rather tired, I believe," she said, forcing a smile, "but it is nothing—nothing at all."

Then, turning to the direction which she knew he ought to take, she was beginning to explain his way, but he quietly stopped her by drawing out a flask from his pocket, and a sandwich case, which he handed to her with a bow.

"Pray refresh yourself with some of these stores," he said, "before you trouble about my stupid blunders."

Cora gazed longingly at the refreshment thus offered, but she did not avail herself of it.

"If I might—" she began.

Then she checked herself. It seemed so like begging that her pride instinctively recoiled, even in her present extremity.

"If you might what?" the stranger said, gazing at her with ill-concealed admiration.

And no wonder, for she was singularly lovely at the moment, with her natural beauty of feature enhanced by the touching languor and alarm that were painted on her face.

"Nay, do not hesitate," he continued. "If I can do anything to deserve the favour I am asking from you I shall be only too gratified to have the privilege. Pray tell me—it will be only conferring a favour on me," he went on, earnestly.

"But it will seem so odd, so suspicious—I—I cannot explain," she said, with a vivid blush bringing a fresh expression on her mobile face. "What I should be so thankful for—so relieved by—would be—"

And she looked again at the silver flask and case while the words actually clove to her tongue.

"Do you mean—is it possible that so slight a favour could cost you such difficulty to ask?" he said, with a smile. "Have you taken a fancy to these trifles? May I ask your acceptance of them?"

The colour flamed deeper in poor Cora's cheeks. She could not accept the interpretation put on her strange conduct.

"Not altogether—no—no," she stammered. "I told you I could not explain, but if, that is, if you would trust them to me and tell me when I could return them, I should be more grateful to you than I can express."

The gentleman almost laughed as he held the gracefully shaped articles out to her.

"If you will do me the honour to take charge of them," he said, "and will keep them as a remembrance of this singular meeting, I shall be extremely pleased not to pass from your memory so soon as I otherwise might. And if we ever come into contact again I will redeem them perhaps with something more suitable for your acceptance."

Cora hesitated, but the remembrance of poor Ernest's suffering and danger, and the delay which had already occurred, was sufficient to overcome idle scruples.

And then, with a few hurried words of thanks, she gave him as clear a sketch of his road as she could well make of that lone country, and proceeded on her way.

But the stranger held out his hand with a frank, pleasant smile.

"At least," he said, "let us exchange better wishes for our future success ere we part."

Cora could scarcely withhold the hand thus asked.

The stranger held it a moment as if he wished to say more, but then she hastily drew it away and bounded out of sight.

He remained for a few moments gazing after her, and then with a muttered "I wonder whether Lady Marian will be half as handsome," he started off on the road she had indicated.

Cora flew rather than ran, animated by the success she had obtained, and, with the elasticity of youth, half forgetting her previous sadness in the sudden relief thus afforded. She reached the quarry and let herself lightly down its steep sides with a fearless rapidity that might have belittled a Swiss girl rather than a sea-nurtured maiden.

"Lord Belfort, see, here is wine, food!" she exclaimed, hastily joining him.

But he was almost past returning her joyous greeting.

The pain and exhaustion and anxiety were fast telling on him, and Cora's heart ached at the sight of his pale, wan face and the languid tone of his voice.

Was he to escape only to die here, in this desolate solitude?

But it would not do to indulge in these melancholy, unnerving fancies, and Cora forced herself to speak cheerfully.

"See," she said, "here are wine that I expect is worthy of its pretty flask and some delicate sandwiches that would tempt a duchess to eat."

Lord Belfort smiled languidly.

"Perhaps," he said, "you may understand some day what would do that, dear Cora; but thank you from my heart for the brave efforts you are making for an unworthy sufferer."

He raised the flask to his lips, and, as Cora had said, the contents certainly proved well worthy of the case.

The rich and pure wine revived wonderfully the exhausted frame and enabled him to eat some of the food that accompanied it, while Cora affected to take her share, albeit with but a small supply of the dainty viands.

And then Ernest more leisurely examined the flask and the case.

"Why, Cora," he said, in surprise, "this is a very singular coincidence; you were talking of a duchess. Do you know that this is the coronet of a duke that is with the crest? How did you come by them?" he asked, almost fearfully.

Cora hesitated; but she dared not risk any evasion of the truth, more especially as Lord Belfort was, of course, concerned at the moment in all that belonged to her movements.



She gave a very brief account of her adventures, however altogether ignoring the presence of Rupert Falconer in the cottage.

Lord Belfort listened with half-amused and yet half-alarmed surprise.

"It is a strange adventure, certainly," he said, musingly; "I ought to know the crest, I suppose, but I have been so much out of England that I have forgotten half that kind of lore. However, it is a blessing, certainly, that you were spared farther fatigue and distress, my noble girl. Ah, Cora, I sometimes regret that I drew you into my sorrow and danger. Better that I should have given myself up at once to the fate that awaited me, and known the worst."

"And brought all kinds of unpleasant facts to light," she resumed, calmly. "No, Lord Belfort, that could but have spread misery beyond belief, and, in any case, it is over now, and all that we can do is to be brave, and conquer adverse fate, if possible. Is your ankle better, do you think?"

"I hardly know," he said, rather despondingly. "I believe it is rather less painful and swollen; but I have no power in it at present, and how we are to get through the days that must ensue it is impossible even to imagine, and your life perhaps will be sacrificed to my selfishness," he added.

"No, no, there is no fear," she said, bravely. "The weather is—thank Heaven—fine and warm, and so long as that continues there will be but little comparative hardship in camping out here. Another day may make a wonderful difference in the strain, and I will see if it is not possible to find some easier ascent up this harbour of safety."

Her own sadness was forgotten in his distress. It is a blessed transmutation when the griefs of others are converted into consolation for personal sorrows. And Cora St. Croix comprehended the art with instinctive readiness.

Yet in the dark, lone hours that succeeded to the exciting day the image of Rupert Falconer, in his dark wrath and jealous bitterness, returned to her mind, and the big tears fell in utter anguish of spirit, when no eye but the omniscient could read the silent regret they spoke.

#### CHAPTER XXVIII.

What cannot be avoided

Twere childish weakness to lament or fear.

Shakespeare.

"WELL, Hugh, you see I was only too anxious to carry out the intentions of our poor lost Sibbald, and I have brought his pretty Netta to the guardianship he had especially chosen for her without any but the most necessary delay."

And Lady Emily drew up her tall figure with the most sublime air of conscious rectitude as she presented her fair young niece to Lord Treville's inquiring eyes.

The girl herself had a somewhat colder and prouder air than the elder lady as she awaited the scrutiny of her unknown and therefore mysterious uncle.

Perhaps she did not altogether approve of the expression of his fine but laggard features. There was too little homage and too stern a self-reliance to promise her the influence to which she had been accustomed. And the young face gradually assumed a sullen and defiant look, which was perhaps the most imprudent challenge that could have been thrown down to the recluse peer.

The whole pantomime did not occupy many moments, but it perhaps influenced the events of years and lives.

"I fear it is a great mistake," returned the earl, coldly. "Sibbald could not possibly have selected any person to whom such a charge would have been more unwelcome or less fitted for its fulfilment."

"Really, I am surprised. At the head of our house, you surely are expected to discharge the office of protector and guardian to its younger members, and Netta, being an heiress and orphan, has an especial claim in your case, and—"

"Hum, you are certainly putting it in a measure on the right footing," interrupted Lord Treville, abruptly. "It is as well for Netta as yourself to comprehend that I have no wish whatever to undertake any control over her; but at the same time I only receive her into my house on condition of perfect submission to my authority while she is here. You understand me, niece, and you, sister?" he added, sternly.

"Oh, yes, exactly; you are quite willing to yield in every way, I am sure, Netta, and indeed she is most docile and sweet in every respect," returned Lady Emily, uneasily. "My love, you are very tired, I am sure," she added, catching a rather dangerous expression on the young lady's face. "You had better retire to your room. We shall all meet again at dinner, I suppose."

The earl gave a careless, almost contemptuous assent, by an inclination of his head, and the girl turned away and swept from the room with a haughtiness worthy of her maiden aunt.

She had scarcely closed the door when Lady Emily resumed the conversation with her brother.

"She is a beautiful creature, is she not?" asked the lady, interrogatively.

"Perhaps, I hardly know," he returned, absently.

"Hardly know? Really, you are more strange than ever," observed Lady Emily, fretfully. "Why, Netta is universally acknowledged to be one of the loveliest girls in the county, or indeed in the whole northern counties, by those who know her."

"My dear sister," interrupted the earl, with a sort of sarcasm that Lady Emily did not perceive, "if it will save any trouble I had rather confess at once that Netta Carew is an angel, only an angel whom I have no wish should trouble me in my house, being of an earthly mould like myself. And, that being settled, suppose we drop the subject," he continued, "for one of far more importance. Tell me," he went on, after a pause, in a constrained voice, "what was the cause of this fatal duel, or rather who was it?"

And he looked searchingly at Lady Emily as he spoke with eyes that defied all attempts at deception or evasion.

"Well, I suppose you must tolerably well know," she replied, after a brief silence. "Only, to be sure, you could perhaps hardly comprehend such absurdity on poor Sibbald's part. But still it is too true what I have no doubt you have been already told. A worthless but certainly rather handsome girl induced poor Sibbald to bring her over under the pretext of being a companion for Netta, and an inducement to improve in her studies, especially in French. But of course she was artful enough to make her pretty face tell in a very different way. And, besides infatuating our brother, she managed in some mysterious way to get some hold over Lord Belfort—Mr. Carew's relative, you know, and then, I cannot explain how, there was a jealous quarrel between them. And you know the rest, Hugh."

Lady Emily's voice trembled very decorously and her handkerchief was duly applied to her eyes as she pronounced the last words.

Lord Treville, however, did not seem to notice the dignified emotion of his sister.

His eyes were bent on the floor in deep thought. Then he raised them with startling sharpness.

"What was the girl's name, Emily? Some one said it was—yes, let me see—that it was Falconer."

"Dear me, what a strange idea. No, it was St. Croix, Cora St. Croix, that she was called, and a queer name that I daresay was only a fancy one. I really took such little interest in her that I never inquired much about such matters. Yet, now I think of it, Falconer may have been the name of the people who brought her up. Pity they did not keep her altogether, and this disgrace would not have come on the family."

"You have no idea where she is then, Emily?"

"Thank Heaven, no," replied the lady. "She went off as she came, without any reference to my will or pleasure. I should not wonder if she is gone off to evil courses and companions. Perhaps she has found out Lord Belfort. It would be a worthy end to the miserable business."

The earl's face darkened like a storm cloud.

"Emily, take care what you say. If your suspicions are merely prejudices you are casting a foul slander on a desolate and unhappy girl. If she is guilty her punishment shall be more than equal to her crime. And now let us drop the subject. You will prefer to go to your apartment till dinner time, and then I shall have better organized the plans which may make your stay here and that of Miss Carew more tolerable than I could otherwise have believed both to yourselves and to me."

The lady drew herself up with her most stately mien, but she had not courage to begin an open war of words with her mysterious brother, and she repaired sullenly enough to her dressing-room, where Netta was awaiting her.

"I tell you, Aunt Emily, it is just impossible for me to remain in this gloomy prison," exclaimed the girl, indignantly, as if unable to contain her passion till the lady had time to settle herself in her easy-chair. "And, as to Lord Treville, if he is going to use me in this infamous fashion I can tell him he will be cruelly mistaken. I would run away first."

"Hush, Netta; it is only for a short time, you know, and then consider all the advantages while you are in deep mourning, and so young too. Remember, in any case, you would be obliged to keep severe seclusion, and under the earl's protection, and in the heart of the Continent you are receiving all the prestige possible under the circumstances. And this air is wonderfully favourable to the complexion," pursued Lady Emily, pleadingly. "And, besides, Netta, love, if you be but wise and submissive I assure you your fortune might be pretty well doubled when the earl dies. He has no one to leave it too that I know of but yourself, for the

next heir is in Australia, I have been told, and your uncle will certainly not let him have a pound more than is necessary of the Carew wealth."

Netta made no reply, she was swelling with indignation, and utterly disdainful of the topics of consolation urged by her aunt.

Luckily, the entrance of her maid put an end to the dialogue, and the preparations for dressing and dinner came to divert the torrent of wrath that boiled in her heart. With wayward coquetry, however, she insisted on an elaborate toilet being made, so far as the latter permitted.

And when she entered the saloon, her fair skin and slight form displayed to the utmost by the black crape robe, and her hair tastefully coiled in artistic braids, she was certainly as fair a picture as might well be imagined for youthful lover or for graceful poet or painter to desire.

But Lord Treville merely looked with a critical glance on the young girl's white figure, as if rather to take in the tout ensemble, and what it might indicate, than with an unreasoning or dazzled admiration.

"It is a pity you should bestow so much trouble on a blind uncle," he said, sarcastically. "At least blind to the attractions you are bent on displaying. But not blind to other things, remember, Netta," he pursued, gravely. "And, once for all, please to understand that although you will have every liberty and pleasure which my house and grounds can give to you I entirely forbid your leaving it or them except with your aunt or myself; nor do I allow any guests to be encouraged or invited, without my express permission, within the precincts of my domains. I mean no reproach, nor imply suspicion, Emily," he added, turning to his sister, "but, after what has passed, I insist on the strict observance of these rules."

(To be continued.)

POSTAL TELEGRAPHY.—From a paper published by the authority of the Postmaster-General the following extracts may be worthy of public perusal:—Postal telegraph cards, with space for twenty words, are now issued at the cost of one shilling each. They are intended for inland messages only, and are delivered free within one mile from the terminal station. They may be posted like an ordinary letter in a pillar, wall, or post-office letter-box, whence they are carried away by the usual collector for transmission by wire. A large number of these boxes are cleared at three a.m., and a telegraph card deposited in one of them after the departure of the night mails or during the time the telegraph office is closed—usually between eight p.m. and eight a.m.—would be taken out at three a.m. and sent off by wire, as soon as the business of the day commenced. Packages containing twenty of these cards may be purchased at 1*l.* per packet. Books of inland telegraph forms, upon which a 1*s.* stamp is embossed, may also be had at the rate of 1*l.* per 20 forms. The cost of a reply to a telegram may be prepaid, and the reply may be sent at any time within two months of the date of the original telegram, a prepaid reply form being delivered to their receiver, who may either use it for the reply or to prepay another message.

FIGHTING IN MADAGASCAR.—The Rev. W. Clarkson gives news of serious events in Madagascar, on the authority of a letter received by him from the Rev. J. Wills, one of the missionaries of the London Missionary Society.—Mr. Wills states that a small expedition was sent off last year from the capital to the south-west, where some Sakalavas had been making raids on the neighbouring Hovas. The commander, contrary to his orders, made an attack on some Sakalava villages. He was led by treachery into a narrow defile, was attacked by the enemy, and lost the cannon which the Hovas had taken with them. It is a military law among the Hovas that if a soldier loses any of the Queen's property he shall be burnt. The law had been discussed with a view to alteration, but had not been repealed, and it was clear that the leader or leaders of this expedition were amenable to it, and all the Europeans were thrown into a state of great excitement, fearing lest the penalty should be inflicted. While the officers were being brought up to the capital an event happened which tended to increase their anxiety. One of the chief conspirators in the attempt to keep the present Queen from the throne, after having been in safe hiding for years, was betrayed, and he, with his brother-in-law, who had concealed him, was taken prisoner. These men were promptly tried, convicted, and executed. Much public feeling was naturally excited, and one of the two men was much commiserated. Meanwhile the officers who had lost the cannon were slowly coming up, and great excitement and discussion took place concerning them. At length it became known that the commander had died on the way, the probability being that he died by his own hand. When the others were tried they pleaded that they had no orders, etc., and the result was their

lives were spared but their honours taken from them. The event, Mr. Wills considers, marks great progress. Formerly they would all have been burnt to death. But this loss of the cannon remained a very serious affair; the Government felt that if action were not taken their supremacy in the island would be endangered. Already the Sakalavas were assuming a threatening attitude, and the issue was that a very large military expedition was despatched from the city on 5th June to the west. This going off of the Taffia (or army) has "collateral bearings very much affecting the whole mission and likely to have important results." There are not wanting some cheering aspects in the case. The two who are in command are brother-in-law and nephew of the Prime Minister; they are both prominent in Church matters. The entrustment of the army to these two men is regarded as showing proof that the war is meant to be conducted on new and better principles than formerly. The orders now issued are that if the Sakalavas give up the cannon and make submission the army is to return without fighting. If they fight the Hovas are not to kill any not found in arms against them. No free Sakalavas are to be enslaved; such are only to be fined. The issue of such instructions as these is an immense advance on former times.

### SCIENCE.

**NATURALLY COLOURED SILK.**—M. Ruimet states that by feeding silk-worms on vine-leaves he has obtained silk of a fine red colour, and that by giving the worms lettuce-leaves they have produced cocoons of an emerald green colour. M. Delidon de St. Gilles, of Vendée, has also, by feeding silk-worms—during the last twenty days of the larva period—on vine, lettuce, and nettle-leaves, obtained green, yellow, and violet cocoons.

**CONGELATIVE EXPERIMENTS.**—Professor Bousin-gault states that a quantity of beef-tea, having been submitted some eight years ago to a temperature of 20 deg. for several hours, has remained in perfectly good condition up to the present time. Sugar-cane juice was at the same time subjected to this treatment, and was found to be in excellent condition. Both substances had of course been kept in closed vessels.

**NAPHTHA AS FUEL FOR LOCOMOTIVES.**—The Russian Steamship and Railway Company announce that they have found naphtha, for steam generation in locomotives, very advantageous. The material employed by the company is the crude oil from the Caucasian and Volga regions, and, compared by weight, the amount consumed was about one-half that of coal. The arrangement for burning naphtha is stated to be of such a nature that no difficulty will be experienced in substituting one for coal consumption in place of it, should it be found desirable to do so.

**IMITATION OF LEATHER.**—A mixture recommended consists of 16 parts of gelatine and five of glycerine. A colouring matter is then added, as may be required—caoutchouc to give elasticity, and boiled linseed oil to render the whole sufficiently flexible. This composition is spread on linen while hot, printed with any pattern desired. The surface is then treated with a solution of alum, sulphate of iron, copper, or zinc. These saline solutions may likewise be mixed with the composition before it is spread on the linen. The surface is, lastly, varnished, and may be bronzed or gilt. Another composition is obtained by boiling linseed-oil with quicklime and borax, which forms a liquid that, on cooling, becomes a thick paste. It is then mixed with rasped cork and more quicklime.

**INDICATOR FOR CARRIAGE WHEELS.**—A device for indicating the distance run by a carriage has recently been patented by Messrs. Durham and Hutton. It consists of a small measuring apparatus concealed in a box, which can be fitted within an ordinary patent axle-cap. To all appearance an axle thus fitted precisely resembles any other axle, but on taking off a small lid or cap an index is disclosed, showing the number of miles run since the index was set. Its primary object is to provide job-masters and let-ters of carriages with some means of ascertaining the distance run by their vehicles. The mechanism is of the simplest character and not likely to get out of order. The apparatus is of course applicable to any carriage whatever.

**LIGHT IN SEA-WATER.**—It has been long felt that it is most desirable to have some means of determining with approximate accuracy the per-centage of light which penetrates any given depth of sea-water. Dr. Hill has devised a method which was used on board the steamer "Hasler," which carried Professor Agassiz's Expedition on the recent Coast Survey. The arrangement consisted of a strip of board about four inches wide, and four feet long, divided into a scale of ten equal intervals, and painted a dark lead

colour at one end, fading into white at the other—a large white board being fastened parallel to it, at a measured distance below it. The relative whiteness of the boards, when this arrangement is sunk into the sea, is a measure of the per-centage of light absorbed, while going down, and up again, through the distance by which the boards are separated.

**THE RESEARCHES IN THE DEEP SEA.**—Professor Rogers recently said or read that the splendid researches in the deep sea are rapidly progressing and are intensely practical, for we may hope they will ultimately give us a photographic chart of the sea bottom, its valleys and its basins, its banks and plateaus and all its topography so fully that a sailing master ought to be able to very nearly tell his position by the lead. Professor Pierce, of the Coast Survey, in discussing Professor Rogers's paper, argued that soundings made compulsory by law will prove the only safeguard of ships, and showed that by the nicest astronomic determinations the navigator may count usually on an error of twenty, and very often as much as sixty miles, without taking into account errors from compass deviation and other sources. The American coast generally shelves gradually into the Atlantic, so much so that the best sailing directions assure the cautious mariner he may, with the lead and chart, find the marks underfoot so plain that he cannot, if he will try them, get unknowingly into the dangers of the shore.

**IMPURE MILK.**—From a paper lately read by a Mr. Rayner at a Dairymen's Association meeting, in Wisconsin, U.S., it seems that the milk question is attracting considerable attention amongst dairymen and farmers of that district. Mr. Rayner, after dwelling at some length on the management of the cow previous to and during the process of milking, which he remarks is most successfully accomplished when cows are handled quietly, stabled neatly (that is the stables being free from offensive odours), and when the milkers are punctual in time, regular in order, quiet and quick in manner, goes on to say that to be able to produce a good article milk must not only be cooled but purified, and that cooling is not necessarily purification. Pure air has been proved to be Nature's great cleanser, and we may safely conclude it is capable of doing the work assigned it, but milk must be induced to receive more of this element than it is naturally inclined to; and to secure this end every time a pail of milk is taken to the can to be strained a current of air should be passed through it whenever it is emptied; the process to be continued till it has been thoroughly exposed. Water, and if convenient ice, for cooling should be used; care, however, should be taken not to reduce the temperature of the milk too quickly, as it seems to be a well-established fact that there may be a too rapid cooling; that is, that the purifying process may be partially if not entirely checked. Those who have made this part of my subject a study (continues Mr. Rayner) are united in the belief that expelling the animal heat of milk by rapidly cooling it does not at the same time expel its impurity or purifying elements, but on the contrary it has a tendency to retain them.

**A CHEMICAL REMEDY FOR THE POTATO DISEASE.**—Professor Alexander S. Wilson states that he has made analyses of the tubers of diseased potatoes, and finds in the ashes a marked deficiency in the salts of magnesia and lime. In the ash of the healthy tuber from 5 to 10 per cent. of magnesia salts are usually found, and over 5 per cent. of lime. But in the ashes of diseased tubers, although the proper quantities of other minerals were found, the percentage of magnesia was only from 1 per cent. up to 3.94 per cent., and of lime only 1.77 per cent. With these considerations before us, I think, says Professor Wilson, that we are justified in appealing to chemical science—to solve the problem as to the prevention of the disease—to suggest not a substance that will destroy the enemy, for this is next to impossible, but to give the plant such nourishment that will enable it to resist the adverse circumstances in which it is placed, as well as the attacks of its own peculiar enemies. Some years ago Professor Thorpe found, from the analyses of diseased and healthy orange-trees, that, in the former, the amounts of lime and magnesia are deficient; the same thing, we have seen, is the case in the diseased potato plant. It has lately been shown by Dr. Craze Calvert that lime is one of the few substances which we know are capable of altogether preventing the development of fungi in organic solutions. He does not give any experiments relating to the action of caustic magnesia on fungi, but doubtless its action will be found to be similar. Here, then, is a curious, and, at the same time, significant fact: Diseased potatoes are deficient in lime salts; lime prevents the development of fungi. May not the development of fungi in the vessels of plants be furthered by this deficiency? The circumstances are such as scarcely to leave room for doubt. So far, then, theory and practice agree; lime has been found by experience to be useful in preventing the disease,

and we cannot doubt that magnesia, if tried, will be found to have a similar effect.

**FIRELESS LOCOMOTIVES.**—An experiment has recently been made in Chicago on one of the street railways. In front of the cars was the motive power, contained in a small, compact, and neat locomotive, manipulated by an engineer. This was the fireless locomotive. It consisted of a boiler 8 ft. long by 3 ft. in diameter, and the usual machinery on a small scale. There was no fuel, no fire, no fireman. The steam was supplied for the round trip of six miles before starting. At the depot was a supply boiler, 16 ft. by 3 ft., in which steam was generated until 200 lb. pressure was indicated by the steam gauge. The locomotive boiler was three-fourths full of cold water. Instead of boiling this by means of a fire and raising the pressure to a required height, the steam was introduced from the supply boiler through an iron tube. The iron tube was connected with the locomotive boiler, the latter running under the water along the bottom of the boiler and letting out the steam, as it was freed from the supply boiler, into the locomotive boiler. This steam, rising through the cold water, permeated it, and quickly raised its pressure to 170 lb. With this supply of steam the locomotive started, drawing a heavy four-horse car over the three miles to Thirty-fifth Street in ten minutes. The amount of steam consumed represented 80 lb. pressure, locomotive starting back with 90 lb. remaining. When the starting-point was reached there was 57 lb. of steam in the boiler, the pressure being reduced only 33 lb. in return trip, which was down a grade. It must be borne in mind that there was a large car, heavily laden, making eighteen miles an hour. The experiment proved conclusively that, as a substitute for dummy engines, the fireless locomotive is, beyond question, a success. There is no fire or fireman required, very little steam escapes, and the locomotive not being one half the size of the clumsy dummy engine does not frighten horses and endanger the public safety.

### ELMA SHERBURNE.

"A FORTUNE, granny, an absolute fortune, position, luxury, relatives; in fact, the old fairy story come true again. Ah, you always said I was born to be a lady. Wild and reckless as I am, I feel it. Shall I go?"

"And why not, why not?" and the eager face of the old woman studied that of the young girl. There could not have been a greater contrast.

The elder was past sixty, with a wrinkled, weather-beaten face, her cheeks and mouth sunk in, her yellowish white hair straggling over her high forehead, and her deep-set, keen eyes giving her a peculiar witch-like look, while the scarlet and black kerchief pinned across her bosom with a tawdry black brooch heightened the appearance. There was a kind of cunning expression as well, a perfect lack of conscience or moral principle, that you could read at a glance.

So much for Granny Camp. And yet she had been good in her fashion to Elma Sherburne, a wail, cast years ago upon her tender mercies.

Elma Sherburne stood on one side of the wide chimney. It was a cool April morning, and there was a fire of logs sending a crimson glare out to mock the sunshine. The double light might have been fatal to a less assured beauty, but it brought hers out, enhanced it, made her dazzling and perplexing.

The old kitchen would have been a study for an artist.

Every motion of her tall, slender, lissome figure was grace; the bare arms were round and tapering, the fingers like carved marble, lacking the pure whiteness; her hair was a bronze chestnut, abundant and rippling, her eyes a peculiar hazel with tints of sea green at their lightest, and flashing black at their darkest. It was a strange, strong face, changeable, flushing and mobile at one moment, stony and reticent at the next.

She was a girl utterly thrown away upon a small place. In truth she was not a favourite with rich or poor. She and granny were ostracized, as it were, and little she cared.

Somehow she managed to get in at most of the merry-makings. She danced like some elfish sprite; she was gay, keen, daring and reckless, and could have bewitched half the young men in the place had she so chosen.

She seemed to muse on granny's answer, and after a moment a dark frown settled over her face, changing it to a phase of desperation.

"Sure enough, why not?" and she gave a wild laugh that sent echoes to every corner of the room. "Do you suppose he would care? He went off and left me to bear that hard fate as I best might. Sometimes I think if he were alive I could hardly care now. I am not a patient Gracilda. I could not sit



and mourn in sackcloth and ashes for a careless lover! Why should I refuse the good things of life?"

"I wouldn't a' believed it of him," sighed the old woman.

"We learn to believe a good many things, don't we, granny?" in a hard, bitter way. "And I should be foolish to let this chance slip through my fingers. Why, I could be a lady with the best of them if you only gave me a fair chance."

She walked rapidly across the kitchen, her head erect and proudly poised, her bright hair shaking off glinting golden ripples.

Granny's eyes followed her admiringly.

"Well," she continued, still pacing the floor like some caged animal, "so let it be. You must keep my secret, granny. Elma Sherburne, nineteen, single, with no encumbrances, going back to her father's people, who for sixteen years have never raised a finger to know whether she was dead or alive. In truth, they would much rather have her dead. But in some odd manner she becomes heiress to a fortune. To be sure, my gracious great-aunt could keep me out of it while she lives, but she is generous, and proposes to invite me to her home. But no encumbrances, mind."

"I can stay here," said granny. "You will write me once in a while?" and yet she looked wistfully up in the young face.

"Granny, you will not stay here. You are the only human creature who has loved me through good and evil. I cannot take you with me, to be sure, but you shall be near, where I can come and see you when I want to lay aside my masquerading costume and be wild Nell Sherburne once more. Do you suppose I would go off to luxury and ease and leave you here to starve? No, no; you wrong me."

Granny laughed weirdly.

"You're a good child; I always said so," she answered. "Yes, I'll go anywhere to have a sight of you now and then."

"I thought of it all night. I did not sleep at all," Elma went on. "I planned it all out. You and I will go quietly away from this miserable place, not saying whither or how, or gratifying any one's curiosity. Then I will make some provision for you. Mr. Nelson need know no more of the story than we told him yesterday. The rest we will bury out of sight—eh, granny?"

The old woman nodded her head.

"A close tongue, honey, is your best friend always. You may trust granny."

Elma was seized with a sudden fit of industry. She caught up the broom, swept the floor, dusted, straightened the chairs, stowed some unsightly articles in the closet, stirred the fire, and then left the room. Her sleeping apartment next underwent the same process, and then she began with herself.

She had hardly completed her toilet when Mr. Nelson made his appearance.

They had gone over all the particulars of the case the day before. Charles Sherburne had married a pretty actress, kept it a secret for three years, and, dying suddenly, confessed it, to the great consternation of his relatives. They discarded the unfortunate wife at once. For a year or two she had tried the stage again, then, heartbroken, followed her husband. Granny Camp had cared for the child, taking her to her home, and together they had managed to live.

Charles Sherburne's aunt was old and childless. She proposed to immortalize herself by endowing an hospital, as the Sherburne estate was large and there were no immediate heirs. So she sent for Mr. Nelson to look over old deeds and wills.

"Henry Sherburne did not attain his majority, I see," Mr. Nelson recapitulated, in his dry, business manner. "Charles Sherburne was married—left no heirs, I suppose, though he had a child born."

"What difference does that make? He was, or would have been, disinherited. Fortunately he died."

"It makes a great difference, my dear madam. Old Mr. Sherburne left his estate to Charles or his heirs. We must find whether this child is living before we proceed."

Miss Ophelia Sherburne looked aghast. She did not believe it and would not. But Mr. Nelson had a secret sympathy with this discarded child, and he was a man of honour. He announced to Miss Sherburne that she could make whatever disposition she chose of her own property, but the estate proper, which was by far the larger part, must be held in abeyance for the present.

He had caused advertisements to be inserted in the papers, and by some odd chain of events one fell into the hands of Elma Sherburne, who caught at it eagerly. It did not bring what she had hoped, but it did place in her very grasp a fortune.

Being still a minor, she must needs have guardians and overseers. When Mr. Nelson reported her as a handsome young girl with the air of a queen Miss Sherburne was roused from her apathy. If she had no boorish country lover, no encumbrances in the shape of relatives, Miss Sherburne would receive her in the home of her fathers.

Elma was not overwhelmed by the prospect of grandeur. She was glad to leave the distasteful life she had lived in that small country place, but she insisted upon some provision for granny.

"If I were to advise," said Mr. Nelson, "I should not mention this condition to Miss Sherburne. You will find it a bone of contention between you. I think I could find you a comfortable home for her, and as your allowances will be liberal you can provide for her quietly and visit her occasionally. Then there need be no heated discussions about it. Miss Sherburne is old and—peculiar."

To himself he said:

"She will soon be tired of the care of the old woman and glad to have her come back to her old home. Youth is ever ungrateful."

They packed up a few articles and prepared to leave.

Granny said to a neighbour that "Nell was going to London to seek her fortune." And so that ripple closed over them.

Mr. Nelson placed Miss Sherburne in the hands of a friend to be fitted out with the necessary wardrobe. He had found a home for granny, who was childishly delighted with the change and quite contented, since she should see Nelly occasionally.

When these necessary delays were ended Mr. Nelson took his ward to her new home: a great, roomy, old-fashioned country-house, with acres and acres of land that increased in value every day.

Strange to say, he had taken a great liking to Miss Sherburne. No lady born and bred could have conducted herself with more ease and propriety. True, Elma was on her good behaviour. She had no desire to shock or offend Mr. Nelson, and she did like the elegance to which she was being introduced. She resolved to forget the old life and all connected with it.

Then her father had been a gentleman and her mother a lady, no doubt, if the truth were known.

"This is our ward, Miss Sherburne," said Mr. Nelson, bringing the young girl into the old library at the manor, where the elder Miss Sherburne sat in state: a very old woman indeed, eked out with all the modern appliances of youth. She was tall and had no doubt been fine-looking in her day. Her false gray hair was artistically arranged and surmounted by a costly French cap; her dress of stone gray silk was trimmed with exquisite lace, her stomach was like a cloud of white mist, and at her throat sparkled a cluster of diamonds, while one thin finger blazed with a priceless gem.

Miss Ophelia Sherburne was hardly prepared for so much dignity, elegance and beauty. For if Elma had been handsome by the chimney corner of the old cottage she was regal now.

Miss Ophelia's fine speech took wings and fled, and she absolutely rose to cover her embarrassment.

"I am glad to see you," she said, with unwonted cordiality. "She is a thorough Sherburne, Mr. Nelson, though she has more spirit than her father. Indeed, she reminds me of my own girlhood. Welcome to the old house. Catherine, attend to Miss Sherburne's wants; I dare say she is fatigued with her journey. Your trunks came this morning, my dear, and you will find your room in order."

She dismissed her with a wave of the hand, and motioned Mr. Nelson to a seat beside her.

"You are quite sure that she has no relatives—on her mother's side?"

"Oh, yes. Set your mind at rest there. She could not have been more fortunately situated."

"And you think she has no low tastes?"

Mr. Nelson laughed.

"Wait until you see more of her. You will not ask the question then."

In this wise Elma Sherburne came into a new life and a fortune. They both suited her. She found herself very ignorant, but she possessed a marvellous adaptiveness. No one would have thought her so lately transplanted from a much lower sphere.

But she was ambitious, and set herself to work to remedy the defects in her education. Miss Ophelia grew absolutely fond of her, and Elma was drawn to her with a curious feeling of pity and gratitude. Neither did she forget granny. The sight of her now and then delighted the old lady beyond measure. Her life at Sherburne Manor was rather quiet. Miss Ophelia's vigorous health began to fail, so there could not be many journeys or much gaiety. Elma did not care. She, too, had her peculiarities. So she read, sang, played, studied, and held the world in a little scorn when she saw how ready it was to worship wealth.

One morning long after this Elma Sherburne woke and saw the sun slowly stealing in at the window of her room. It was to be her wedding-day, and she was twenty-four. Many changes had come about in the five years. Miss Ophelia had died, and, oddly enough, had not left all her fortune to Elma, but be-

thinking herself of a distant cousin, had remembered him most kindly.

"Not that I care so little for you," she had explained to Elma, "but he is the only other Sherburne heir, I believe, and you have an abundant fortune."

Elma smiled. It made no difference to her. She had sufficient surely.

Then granny was called away. Elma shut up the house, and travelled with a companion and Mr. Nelson.

It was about the legacy business that she first met Mr. Owen Delamayne, a rather tall, fine-looking man, extremely well bred, courteous, refined, with a slight touch of formalism that hedged him about like fine frost. Affable as he was, no one ventured upon liberties with him. Women brought out their highest art when they entertained him.

Elma began by liking and disliking him. She resolved to consider him proud, exclusive, and somewhat pompous. His cultivation and refinement pleased her; the peculiar deference and respect which he paid her were very gratifying, but beyond that he seldom went. Had he any real heart?

It must be confessed that Elma had changed greatly in her new life. No one would have connected her with the daring, reckless girl she once was. Perhaps it was that then she was always fighting against something; now there were so few opposing forces. She had grown quiet, and rather languid, took the admiration that was offered as her just due, and listened to despairing suitors with indifference.

"I think I have no heart," she said, wearily, to herself one day. "It is dead and buried. Better so perhaps."

It appeared strange to her now, lying there in the sunshine, that she was about to marry Mr. Delamayne. She had been a trifle elated to have him single her out from the host of women who would have worshipped him at a nod or beck. He suited her. She did not want violent love-making; such passions soon burned themselves out to black and bitter ashes. His grace and quiet dignity soothed her like a harmonious strain of music. Perhaps too he had a peculiar power over her. She had not thought of marrying him until he asked her, and then she had not thought of refusing. A six-months' courtship had brought the wedding-day.

"I suppose I shall marry somehow—as well now as ever. And yet I seem so unlike myself," she mused. "I wish it were all over. I hate changes. One smooth, even groove satisfies me better."

But the maid entered, and a stir began. She resigned herself to friends and attendants. Her trunks were packed, the wedding garments laid out, her beautiful hair arranged with exquisite taste, and last of all the snowy veil and dress, covering her from head to foot, and trailing about in its misty fashion, making her look lovely and wraith-like in her regal composure.

"They're a handsome couple," declared the old housekeeper. "It's a thousand pities that Miss Sherburne didn't live to see them—and they the last of the family too. It comes round just right."

They were gone a month, then returned and spent the remainder of the summer quietly at Sherburne Manor. In the autumn they shut up most of the house, left two servants in charge, and went to London.

The new life, with its rush and whirl of gay society, stirred Elma Delamayne as nothing had been able to do as yet. Mr. Delamayne took his position among old friends who were interested in various topics of the day. Elma had only seen him in the quiet of Sherburne Manor, but she learned now that with his refined and gracious dignity there was a large element of strength, and the strictest and manliest integrity was the foundation of what she had hitherto considered the formalisms and culture of society. The knowledge surprised her in many ways. Had she done wisely in marrying such a man with all that past at the back of her life?

I think up to this period Elma Sherburne's moral consciousness had been singularly blunted. Stepping out of the old sphere, she had cast it all behind her. The secrets of her life were mostly buried in the graves of others, and why should she care to raise unquiet ghosts?

She had never thought long or deeply on any unpleasant topic. Now she tried to dismiss this. She had brought her husband youth, beauty, fortune; she graced his home, made it elegant, attractive, and ministered to him in the delicate ways that appeared most satisfactory. He had chosen her of his own free will. Once when she had made some reference to her past life, he had answered, with an impatience unusual for him:

"Yes, yes; Miss Ophelia once told me. I do not see that you are in any degree answerable for the faults of others."

To rid herself of a little troublesome inward communing she took up society with a new and wonderful zest. Her freshness and the little follies she made outside of conventionality created for her a peculiar atmosphere. The wits of the day measured lances with her; poets sunned themselves in her beauty, grace, and the touches of womanly tenderness; while even men of science discovered a strength and power of grasp in her mind that they seldom found in a young and fashionable woman.

Among her new friends was one who interested her peculiarly. Floyd Rutherford was an artist, though he made portrait painting more of a speciality. He and Delamayne had been companions, and had held a more or less intimate acquaintanceship for years. Indeed Delamayne had called him to decide upon some matters of ornamentation that he had kept all surprises for Elma. He had been the first to welcome the young wife in her new position, and was a frequent guest.

He was a man of thirty-five or thereabout, with the subtle charm of being made handsome by expression. In repose his face wore an indolent, almost indifferent look, and frequently his voice had a languor that discouraged attempts at conversation, and gave him the effect of being exclusive. To the men and women who could penetrate the network of reserve behind which he entrenched himself, or perhaps more correctly speaking to those whom he chose should be admitted, he was most fascinating. The rich stores of a well-cultivated and artistic mind were spread before them like a feast.

With Elma the experience was new, and in a degree bewildering. It gave her a strange and exquisite consciousness of power to be able to move this man, considered in some respects impassable. Very fascinating is the study of the soul, and she thought she must have touched and stirred his in some unknown way.

He smiled a little to himself. He had seen so much of the world, so much of women. Common flirtations held no charm for him; it was only in the higher and finer and perhaps more dangerous types of influence that he allowed himself a wide liberty, and he found his compeers among the educated and refined, and too often married women who were secretly dissatisfied with their lot.

Mr. Delamayne proposed presently that Rutherford should paint Mrs. Delamayne's portrait. There were some general discussions as to dress, but the husband deferred to his friend and his wife. Then the sittings commenced.

Her husband accompanied her to the studio the first morning, and remained through the interview. Afterwards she went by herself.

These busy moments spent with him there were scarcely a matter of thought to her, since she saw him so frequently alone in her own house. But to him it was a vantage ground. He began to study her as one might a rare and beautiful flower: the fine soft skin, where the subtle warmth ran to and fro with a word, the abundant hair that rippled in shining waves, the deep, changeable eyes with their look of innocent wonder so like ignorance that he experienced a strong desire to become her teacher.

"For she does not love Delamayne," he mused to himself. "It is like the scores of society marriages that meet one on every hand. Probably some one will open her eyes in the course of time."

With that he began to offer her some of the more delicate attentions. He sent her flowers occasionally; he read to her choice extracts, whose rather insidious sentiments were almost smothered in the elegance of the language. Then as they glanced up she read the peculiar interest in his eyes, in the finely modulated voice and the earnest expression. Had she been a coquette she would have plumed herself upon it.

"What peculiar influence do I have over this man?" she would ask, in her moments of quiet communing. "He is so self-contained in general society, but in these brief interviews does not hesitate to lay bare his soul to me. What charm draws us together?"

It was not love. He misread when he supposed he was laying the foundation for a grand passion in her soul. Not that he ever meant to compromise her in the world's esteem. He had managed too many such affairs. They would one day walk to the very brink of the precipice, look down it shudderingly, and know what might be possible, or what might have been.

With her there would be weeks of exquisite anguish, longing and despair, after the manner of women. He would comfort and strengthen, and be her hero for all time, because he saved her in her hour of peril.

Late one spring evening they two sat in the library. The wide drawing-room doors were open, guests had come and gone, and he had turned the lights lower to avoid the glare. She, a trifle fatigued, was leaning

one elbow on the table, the soft lace sleeve partly fallen away from the fair rounded arm. She rested her cheek on the palm of her hand, and was gazing dreamily into space when the rustle of a paper roused her.

"What are you doing?" remarking that Rutherford's head was bent over something.

"Sketching you. Nay, do not stir. The position is perfect. I have painted you for the world, for your friends, but I am not satisfied with it for myself."

"For yourself?" she repeated, with a curious intonation.

"Yes. Is it strange that I like to see you and remember you apart from the world and its trifles that go to make up what we call the duties of life? Duties indeed!"

"As what?" she asked, slowly, turning her head a trifle that she might see him more clearly.

"Can you ask? Do you not feel that very little of living is real life? Think of the people who have been here this evening and the topics we have run over. One hour with a sincere friend is worth it all."

"True in some respects, untrue in others. It would be selfish, I think, for a person with fine natural gifts to thrust aside a dozen people who could be pleased and entertained, and spend half his life for the sake of one who perhaps in the end will be no wiser and no better."

"But much happier. Do you not take that into account?"

"Yet is the happiness of one person so much greater than the happiness of a number?"

"Have you no preference?" he asked, in a somewhat bitter tone. "Are all friends alike to you? Do you put them on the same plane, no matter what their qualities and virtues may be? I had hoped—"

He paused and bit his lip. What was there in this indifferent conversation that should so heat his calm blood?

"I meant general friends or acquaintances—which ever you choose to term them."

"How much do you know about yourself?" he asked, abruptly. "How strong are your likes and dislikes?"

She laughed a little at that.

"Why, you are grown a very child," she answered, glancing at him.

"Yes," he returned, "there are influences that send men back to the freshness and fervour of their earliest manhood. Cannot the same power do as much for a woman?"

His face was strangely flushed, his eyes eager. Indeed the sudden and unlooked-for opposition, that was hardly more than passing coldness, roused him to an unusual heat.

Meanwhile she was studying him with dreamy eyes, and thinking. If she could be led back to the stormy passion of her girlhood would this man have any power over her?

There was a step in the adjoining room, and Owen Delamayne entered. Elma started almost guiltily. It was Floyd Rutherford who displayed ease and self-possession, but as he spoke he quietly rolled up the bit of paper and thrust it in his pocket.

"Where have you been, Delamayne?" he asked. "Your wife has had a perfect ovation this evening. The Cartiers, painter and poet, have been here, and hosts of others."

"I am sorry to have missed them. Ashburton detained me longer than I expected."

"About that stupid business of his! He will have to go under; there is no help for it."

"I am not so sure of that. He has been very unfortunate through the carelessness of others, but I think him a man of the highest integrity. It seems as if a helping hand might bridge over the hard places for him, and enable him to take a firm footing once more. Indeed it is not quite as bad as I expected."

"I am glad to hear it really. But you do not propose to step into the breach?"

Delamayne smiled, and inclined his head slightly. It seemed to Elma that she had never remarked a greater difference in two faces. One was full of high-bred selfishness and a peculiar love of ease, as well as disbelief in the more noble traits of human nature. The other was grave, but sweet and noble.

"He has been doing a praiseworthy action," she said to herself, with a sense of approbation.

Rutherford rose.

"I must wish you good night," he said, courteously. "Mrs. Delamayne, do you know that your husband has a kind of Quixotic vein running through him? It will hardly do to let him have his head too much."

Then the husband and wife were alone. Did she experience a vague sense of danger that she went to him of her own accord?

"Elma," he said, clasping her in his arms. "Elma!"

"I am glad you have been kind and generous to some one in distress," she said, making talk to hide a strange embarrassment that she had never felt before. "Mrs. Ashburton will bless you."

"And I have pleased you—that is worth it all."

Did he care so much to please her? She glanced upward in a confusion that he painfully misunderstood. Then she began to release herself from his clasp. He looked into the clear-cut face and took her hands again. What new feeling stirred within him?

"Elma," he began, gravely, "I have a confession to make. I was in the drawing-room longer than you thought. I heard—"

"What?"

She was trying to think what they had said.

"And your picture—for himself—"

"Oh!" she exclaimed, with a strange, sweet cry, "you love me! You have been jealous?"

"I have always loved you, even if I have not quite understood—"

And his voice had a slow, uncertain sound. "Indeed, I do not think I have. But to see you hovering on the brink of danger—"

She laughed then.

"Do you suppose I am in danger of loving Floyd Rutherford? As if I were not too proud, and knew my duty too well!" she exclaimed, in disdain.

"Are they a woman's best safeguards?" he asked, in a low, earnest tone.

"Owen, how peculiar you are! Why do you question me thus?"

"Because I love you, I think. Because I know my friend is fascinating, and my wife's experience in the ways of the world has been rather limited. I do not doubt your pride nor your integrity. But I felt to-night when I looked at both your faces that I wanted one more assurance that your heart was all my own."

She dropped into a chair, amazed, and at first a trifle indignant. There were new depth and tenderness in the eyes that were watching her half sadly. It was love that doubted, not jealousy. Did he indeed care so much for her heart, her regard? For she had considered her marriage like most of the fashionable marriages that had come under her notice. Esteem, honour, pride and a friendly regard for basis, but no better than the many whose foundation was wealth or an elegant position. But to hear this language from his lips! Why, she had thought him incapable of any warmth of passion.

"You do not love me, you have not loved me as I thought, as I hoped!"

His voice seemed to thread its way along an unknown path, and was strangely tremulous.

She rose then and came nearer, her fair cheek flushing with girlish bashfulness. She had said that her day of love was over, that she had nothing but calm regard to give any man. That she could be loyal and care tenderly for another's welfare she had never for a moment doubted, but in this new and sudden rush of feeling her whole nature seemed to awake to new strength, to a better and loftier purpose.

"Do you care so much?" she asked, in a soft tone. "Has the past been only a dream? Is it true that later life can have its blossom as well as youth?"

"Is it strange that I should learn to care for you? that you should grow dearer day by day as I saw your grace and tenderness unfold? And yet I could not remember that I had ever called just such a light to your eyes that I saw to-night. Forgive me if I am jealous that another should do it."

She took his hand and pressed it to her lips, with a humility at once gracious and tender that he could not have doubted even if he had felt less certain. He opened his arms and would have pressed her to his heart with a sudden rapture but she held herself aloof by a wave of her hand.

"Hear me first. I am not sure that you will think me worthy of so dear, so entire a love. It seems to me now that our courtship must have been strangely unlike that of most lovers. Perhaps if you had asked more then I should have told you what I believed to be the truth, that I had no heart to give. Years before I met you I had gone through with a brief romance of love and—pain," she added, in a faltering voice, though that was not the word trembling on her lips.

"As if that, as if any girlish episode could compare with the strength and earnestness and glory of a woman's soul! To-day I would rather have your later love than any crude passion."

Suppose she told him all, would he rather have it then? Would it not be the wildest folly to blight both these lives in the auspicious dawn of such a passion? Right or wrong, she was his wife, and to make him miserable now—

"I love you," she said, with a sudden joyousness.

"Whether having this basis of respect and quiet regard tends to deepen it I cannot tell. If you are satisfied, if you want the strength and fervour of a soul that seems to have just learned its capabilities"



they are yours. I will have no thought, no care but you."

He bent over and kissed her.

"How strange that we should be so slow in coming to the great joy of our life," he returned. "Yet perhaps my temperament is not one to admit of rapid combinations. I have always shrunk from those rapid, fiery passions that too often scorch and devour and leave behind an arid, ashen track. I must have respect and trust first of all."

She shivered with a peculiar consciousness, but he only drew her closer.

"I have all your heart?" he whispered.

"All my heart. You have even crowded out the old, dead dream."

"Then I am satisfied."

There was a long, blissful pause. For many minutes she shut out everything—it was a part of her temperament. Conscientiousness had never been strongly roused in her soul.

"And the picture?" she asked, timidly, at length. "Shall I demand it from Mr. Rutherford?"

"It is hardly worth while. If he chose he could make a sketch from the portrait. No; indifference will be best—with such a man."

She smiled a little, and a lustrous light came into her eyes. Why, she had never dreamed of so noble and tender a love, that could withal be pained with trifles. As for Floyd Rutherford, he had interested her momentarily—no more.

But a fascinating man of the world can ill bear eclipse, no matter how trifling his conquest had appeared before. He was peculiarly interested in Mrs. Delamayne. Now he found himself shut out of the delicate little confidences so much to his taste. What the barrier was he could not at first divine. It was mortifying to think he had made so slight an impression upon her, that she one of those finished coquettes who, when they saw a man attracted, lured him on with a show of indifference? In this he could match her. When he found her surrounded by guests, and so deeply interested that she made no effort to give him a few spare moments, he absented himself for days, but repaid the slight to his vanity by working assiduously at the new picture.

Had she indeed forgotten the sketch?

He announced to her by note that her portrait was completed. Would she call and see if it was satisfactory?

Mr. Delamayne accompanied her. Mr. Rutherford received them with the most cordial courtesy. Certainly he had brought his highest skill to the task in Mrs. Delamayne's portrait. The likeness was perfect, the tints of the flesh were soft and pearly, the abundant hair was there in all its richness.

"You have fairly excelled yourself, Rutherford," Mr. Delamayne said, with frank admiration. "I am glad to have this from the hand of one I value so highly, and doubly delighted to possess such a portrait of my wife. As a friend, I want to acknowledge my obligation to you."

He shook the artist's hand warmly, and Elma gave him a glance of pleasure and gratitude commingled. But he hated to have her put this strong yet insome, respects imperceptible barrier between them. There was one bold move still left him.

"Mrs. Delamayne," he began, "here is an unfinished sketch I wish you to examine. It may interest you."

Delamayne still stood before his wife's portrait. Rutherford led her to a far corner of the studio, where they were quite shut out of sight.

As she guessed, it was the sketch he had taken, strongly idealized, yet with a melting, tender expression in the eyes that vexed her.

"Owen," she exclaimed, "come and look at this. It is the sketch I told you of. I hardly know whether I like myself so transformed or not."

Rutherford could have crushed her where she stood. Did she mean to have no secret from her husband?

Delamayne crossed the room carelessly and gave it a glance.

"I prefer my own," he returned, with a peculiar smile. "Do you mean to startle the world with some unnatural combination of beauty, Rutherford?"

"That was not my idea," he said, shortly.

"I am afraid the model is at fault for such a purpose," Elma answered, indifferently. "It can be neither saint nor angel, and there are more beautiful women in the world."

Rutherford turned away abruptly. The picture had failed of its purpose, and just under his breath he vowed it to destruction.

There was a little desultory gossip concerning future arrangements. The Delamaynes were to take a short trip, returning to Sherburne Manor to spend the remainder of the summer. A number of guests had been invited for a fortnight, and they would be most happy to place him on the list. Would he honour them?

There was no insincerity in this. Owen Delamayne felt strong enough to dare any rival.

"At present I am too undecided to say what is possible, but I will bear your kind invitation in mind."

"You can hardly find a more beautiful haunt, rest assured," returned Delamayne.

At length he bowed them out of the studio. Then he threw himself on the broad Turkish lounge in a spasm of jealous anger. Had this woman found her soul without his intervention? Did she love her husband with a fervour that went beyond fashionable indifference? Well, he had loved her too. He, the cool-brained man of the world, had become infatuated with some charm in this woman, and the mortification, the disappointment was bitter in the extreme. All he had promised himself was a friendship so near the confines of love that she might wish herself free. Instead she had shaken off his charm like a bird pluming her wings for flight, while he was insane enough to give half his fame, if it would have won him that, for one of those olden talks when he alone had power to call the soft colour to her cheek and the dreamy light to her eye.

"I have been a blind, stupid idiot," he said, "Let her go then! As if there was any lack of agreeable women in the world!"

He seized the brush and roughly painted out the picture on which he had bestowed such eager interest. In a month's time some other should reign in her place. She would find his approval of more account than she fancied it now.

But when London was deserted and dull, and bright eyes no longer smiled in his praise, he too set out on a restless pilgrimage, flitting from haunt to haunt, gathering a little beauty here and there, rock and tree, sunshine and shade, and the coolness of glinting waters. Something else he found—a bit of romance concerning the woman who had wounded his vanity so deeply, a thing he was not likely to forgive easily. Then he decided to visit Sherburne before the season was over.

Elma and her husband, after a few weeks' journeying, were glad to be settled in their lovely home once more. Since their sudden awakening they had drawn nearer and nearer to each other. To herself she was a profound mystery. It appeared as if she had just begun to develop afresh; as if from her childhood she had been warped and thrust awry, growing up in unwholesome darkness. The brief passion that she had called love before had been a delirium of the senses only; it had called forth no sentiment of nobleness, heroism, or the desire to make herself more worthy for another's sake. Afterward, in her new sphere, she had cast it out of her mind. But now, in her new consciousness, it returned like an avenging angel. The pure love of her husband had raised her so high that she wished to be all that was noble and womanly for his sake.

And between them there was a long, unexplained story. If he knew all, would he still hold her as highest and dearest? He understood now that Floyd Rutherford's admiration had been no temptation to her, and honoured her the more that it was so. But the torture to her was in the fact that her husband supposed he held all her confidence. A just and enlightened conscience could not endure this reproach to itself.

They had been wandering through the twilight walks one evening when he paused at the spot where he had asked her hand.

"How blind we must have been to consider that love," he said, with a smile. "I can never sufficiently thank Heaven that my eyes have been opened. And yet you must have changed greatly, my darling. In those days you were a proud, reticent woman. How could I have dreamed of finding a warm, velvety rose under the cool, green leaves?"

"You love me very much, Owen?" she said, with faltering sadness in her tone.

He detected it in his mood of jealous tenderness.

"Are you sorry?" he asked. "Is it your nature to regret being well loved?"

She raised her eyes. No, she could not endure her misgiving. She must put the love to the test, and win or lose. She could not take the entire confidence and not give hers in return.

"Owen," she began, "I am not as noble or as worthy as you think. If I had known the honour and purity of love at its highest estate I should not have married you with my story untold."

"My darling, you can tell me nothing new, Miss Ophelia long ago explained the matter to me."

"But she did not know this," Elma interrupted, with a touch of her old girlish vehemence. "I used to believe that it was better buried out of every one's sight, but something impels me to bring it to you for judgment. Let me stand a culprit in your sight until it is told."

Delamayne turned ashen pale for an instant.

"Oh, it is not so much of a crime," she cried, hastily.

"Do you think I could have brought disgrace to any man?"

"Let me hear it," he returned, with forced calmness. She paced the walk rapidly for a few seconds, then stood before him, flushed and downcast.

"You know that old life," she began. "My mother died, and I was all but a pensioner on the bounty of a rough but kind-hearted woman. I did not grow up among the refinements of life, but some of them came naturally. Still at fifteen I was only an immature child, yet different from the village girls, wild as any untrained bird, and then I fell into one of the headlong passions of youth. A young man of good family persuaded me into a private marriage. We went to a neighbouring town for the ceremony, and kept our secret for many months. One evening he left me in the highest health and hope, and the next day he lay a corpse in his mother's house. I went to her after the burial and told her my story, which she utterly refused to believe. I had no proof—my lover had taken care to put that out of my hands—and she threatened me with the bitterest persecution if I dared to repeat the tale to any one. What I suffered in those days I cannot tell you. Granny cared for me with the tenderness of a mother. My little baby was born dead, and in my desperation I could hardly weep over it. We kept our secret, she and I, for fear to meddle with us. What wonder if I grew desperate and reckless? And then came tidings of the fortune. It was mine, and I had been crowded out of it all those weary years. I took it with hardly a thought of the new duties. But one of my first tasks when I came to have money at my disposal was to seek for proofs of my marriage, which, after all, were quite easily obtained. Somehow, you will understand, I never could explain this to Miss Ophelia. I thought I had a right to keep it quite out of sight."

"But you were his wife?"

"Truly and honourably," and she raised her head proudly. "But I wanted to forget all that old episode, and I did succeed in thrusting it out of sight. Believe that I was proud to give you my youth and beauty, and to restore Sherburne Manor to you. I know now that there are some things which you prize more highly. Forgive me for so cruelly misunderstanding you. If I loved and honoured you less I could have borne to go on my way with the story untold. And now that you know all pass your sentence. I will abide by it."

"My poor child, do you suppose I should consider you any the less worthy for what you have suffered? The thought of possessing the home of my boyhood, endeared by a host of tender memories, was perhaps a temptation to woo you. And yet it seemed as if I must have loved you the more tenderly had I known all then."

"And you will—forgive?"

He took her in his arms.

"My darling, we of all people cannot afford to throw away our new-found love. Neither can I wholly blame you for your course. Let it be sufficient, then, that we begin a new life from this hour. We have but just learned to understand our needs and each other, and there is a blessed happiness in store for us."

"My dear husband, Heaven be praised for this happiness at your hands. It was you who taught me the first true joy of a noble love, and my whole life shall be devoted to it and you."

He could not doubt her, and he felt that the last barrier between them had been swept away. They had but to go on to a better and sweeter life.

So Floyd Rutherford found the sting taken from the arrow that he had thought barbed so securely and bitterly. Her truth and love had saved her.

A. M. D.

ANECDOTE OF LORD PALMERSTON.—Gordon, the Scottish painter, tells this story of Lord Palmerston:—I had exhibited for several years, but without any particular success. One year, however—the year before I painted "The Corsicans"—Lord Palmerston took a sudden fancy to my picture called "Summer in the Lowlands," and bought it at a high figure. His lordship at the same time made inquiries after the artist, and invited me to call upon him. I waited upon him accordingly. He complimented me upon the picture; but there was one thing about it he could not understand. "That there should be such long grass in a field where there so many sheep," said his lordship, with a merry twinkle of the eye. "It was a decided hit this; and, having bought the picture and paid for it, he was entitled to his joke. 'How do you account for it?' he went on, smiling, and looking first at the picture and then at me. 'Those sheep, my lord,' I replied, 'were only turned into that field the night before I finished the picture.' His lordship laughed heartily and said 'Bravo' at my reply, and gave me a commission for two more pictures; and I have cashed since then some very notable cheques of his.

## THE PLANET MARS—IS IT INHABITED?

CAN it be possible that in all the vast universe but a single planet, and that the merest infinitesimal portion of the grand whole can be the abode of living creatures such as ourselves? Does Science teach that other worlds are unpeopled deserts, serving no other purpose than to traverse their orbits obedient to the Divine will? Such are the questions which astronomers have been forced to meet and answer, unaided except by the testimony afforded by analogy and by deductions from theory, based perhaps on evidence mainly presumptive.

Leaving out of their consideration the possibility of organisms existing under conditions unknown upon the earth, the searchers of the heavens have examined the brilliant orbs which circle round the sun, first crudely and imperfectly, but, as their knowledge and means increased with the progress of science, with augmented accuracy and power, adding discovery to discovery, until, link after link, the chain of proof has been forged, leading to but never reaching a universally accepted conclusion.

As to all the planets but two the answer is certainly negative; the condition of all other worlds is such as to render human existence upon them absolutely impossible. Of the excepted pair, on one, Venus, life may exist, but every probability is to the contrary; regarding the other, Mars, divided opinion is encountered, and while it is asserted on one hand that with reasonable certainty the planet may be assumed as the abode of living beings, on the other the presumption is as specifically denied.

Deferring the consideration of Venus to some other opportunity, it will be of interest to examine the present state of our knowledge regarding the Planet of War, and at the same time to glance briefly over the arguments, pro and con, which have been advanced to prove or disprove its habitability.

Mars has been for some time past plainly visible in the evening heavens, a ruddy star in or near the constellation Virgo. Forty millions of miles, at least, divide us from the bright globe of light which modern revelation tells us is the miniature of our own earth; 5,000 miles is its diameter, bearing a proportion to the similar terrestrial dimension of 5 to 8; consequently the relative surfaces are as 25 to 64, or, more plainly, our world is two and a half times the larger of the two. Comparing the relative densities, Mars is about three fourths that of the earth, hence the force of gravity at its surface is much less than the corresponding terrestrial attraction. If, therefore, the inhabitants of that planet are proportioned similarly to ourselves, their strength must be far greater in reference to their dead weight than is the case with us. In fact, if that organization known as the "Fat Men's Club" could be transported to Mars, its members, here barely able to support their mountainous protuberances and walk, would easily skip lightly over six-foot fences or bound along the ground in a way that would leave the best of our runners far in the rear. The nature of the inhabitants of Mars we shall allude to, however, in detail farther on.

The orbit of Mars is very eccentric. Its centre is 13,000,000 miles from the sun, so that the light and heat received on the surface of the planet must vary considerably. It is less than ours in the proportion of 4 to 9. The Martian year lasts for 687 of our days, and the Martian day is 40 minutes longer than ours. The inclination of the equator to the plane of its orbit is  $27\frac{1}{2}$  deg., or very little more than is the case with the earth, which is  $23\frac{1}{2}$  deg. The changes of the seasons, so far as depending upon this cause, differ little from our own.

These general points being fixed, let us now turn to the planet's geography, or areography more pro-

perly, as we say selenography in referring to the moon. Comparatively speaking, our knowledge of the surface divisions of Mars is next in extent to our information regarding the earth. We know more, in fact, about the hemisphere of the moon than we do of our own globe; for while the vast lunar deserts have been measured to nearly an acre, and the mountains and craters to within thirty or forty feet, there are on the earth 11,400,000 square miles unexplored and unknown.

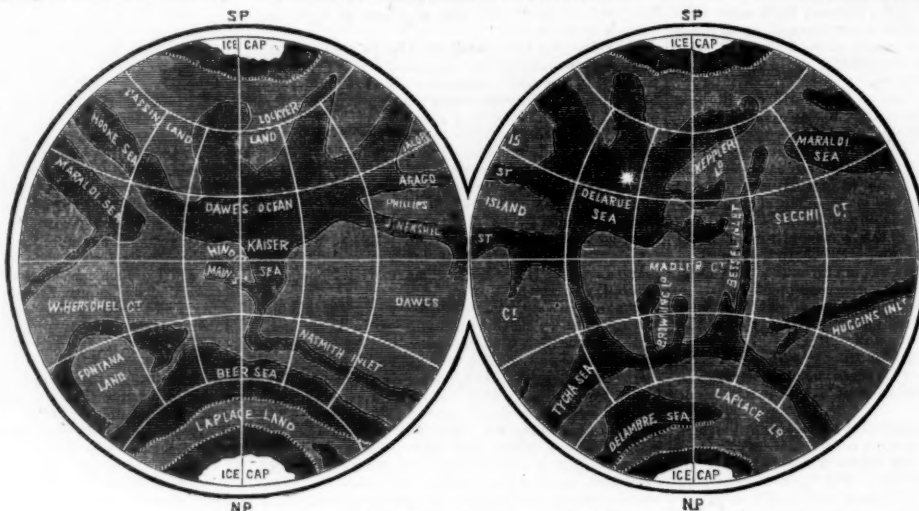
Jupiter and Saturn are almost constantly obscured by their closed envelopes, so that their true surface is rarely if ever beheld. Uranus and Neptune are mere points of light. Mercury is almost always eclipsed by the rays of the sun. Venus, nearly twice as large as Mars in diameter, is nearer to the earth, and comes within 30,000,000 of miles of us, but travels between the earth and the sun, so that her bright face is turned to that luminary and her dark hemisphere towards us. Hence Mars is the best fitted for examination.

In regarding the planet through a powerful telescope it is at once observable that the poles are marked by brilliantly white zones, which, it is be-

back as the Arabian astronomers the variations of colour in the stars have been noted—the ruddy hue of Aldebaran and the vivid whiteness of Capella being cases in point. But the telescope has revealed to us the existence of numerous star-suns of the most varied tints, and it is more than probable that the planets of some of the astral systems experience a sunlight of brilliant crimson or intense azure.

But it may be well urged that we are assuming too much in jumping to the conclusion that the red spots on Mars are land, the green ones water, and the white ones ice and snow. What proof have we that land, water, and ice exist on the planet at all? Mars has clouds. The invariable appearance of the moon, even under the strongest telescopes, does not exhibit the slightest trace of floating vapour on its surface, nor do the occultations of the stars indicate the existence of an atmosphere. With the planet we are considering the contrary is the case. Its spots change in brightness, and it seems at times as if a veil blurred the configurations of its surface for hours and days at a time. We can tell by the position of the Martian equator what season is in progress, in either hemisphere at any time; and it has been

found that when it is winter in one hemisphere and summer in the other the former portion is always obscured. Just as upon the earth, the wintry sky is rarely clear. Aeronauts tell us that, at high altitudes, the clouds below them sometimes entirely obscure the surface of the earth, or, at times, breaking away, admit but small portions of its dark surface to the view. Hence, when Mars is thus covered in parts, it is as if such portions were blotted out, while the shape of the true surface be-



[THE HEMISPHERES OF MARS.]

lieved, are caused by deposits of snow and ice. These arctic regions appear to extend during the Martian winter to parallel 45 deg. of latitude.

We have said that Mars is ruddy, and the fact is easily discernible by the naked eye. Aided by the telescope, however, the surface appears to be far from uniformly red. The colour is confined to particular spots or regions, the intermediate parts being of a greenish hue. Observations extending over long periods have demonstrated that the relative position of these divisions has never changed, hence they are not accidental phenomena. Thus, being considered as physical peculiarities, they have been made the subject of close study by almost all eminent astronomers.

For reasons which we shall explain hereafter the red portions of the planet have been considered as land and the green regions as water, and their appearance has been carefully mapped.

We give herewith a map constructed by Mr. R. A. Proctor from a number of drawings, in which the various seas and continents are marked with the names of noted astronomers, by which they are distinguished. The seas seen are all land-locked—true Mediterranean— and communicate with each other only by narrow straits. The most remarkable features are the great equatorial zone of continents—of which there are four, namely, Herschel, Dawes, Madler, and Secchi—and the peculiar forms of the bell-shaped seas in the first of these grand divisions.

The waters, or rather the spots which we assume to be fluid, are of the same colour as terrestrial seas, grayish green; but the land is a uniform ochraceous red. To explain this latter peculiar tint various theories have been propounded. It was at first supposed to be due to the atmosphere, but this view was soon abandoned, and at the present time it is generally believed to be the prevailing tint not only of the soil but of the vegetation. So that instead of verdant expanse of prairie or green forests the eye is met by crimson trees or scarlet grass, and the dull lurid shades peculiar to such hues.

Singular as this may appear to us terrestrials it is in strict accordance with the phenomena of colour which obtain in the stellar universe. Even so far

low is changed. Careful observations, therefore, indicate, with every appearance of probability, that the misty veil is formed of clouds, vapour, or fog; so that, in fact, unless it be a fine day on Mars we cannot see his surface.

(To be continued.)

**WESTMINSTER ABBEY NEW MEMORIAL WINDOW.**—The Dean of Westminster having issued a circular proposing to place a memorial window in the chapel of Westminster Abbey, where William Wordsworth's monument stands, in memory of George Herbert and William Cowper, who were educated in Westminster School, a copy found its way to America, and came into the possession of the proprietor of the *Philadelphia Ledger*, Mr. G. W. Childs, who has communicated with the Dean, asking to be permitted to bear the entire cost of the memorial, and his offer has been accepted.

**WILD BIRDS' PROTECTION BILL.**—The select committee appointed to inquire into the advisability of extending the protection of a close season to certain wild birds not included in the Wild Birds' Preservation Act of 1872 have just issued their report. The following are the recommendations which they have agreed to submit to the House of Commons:—1. That the protection of certain wild birds named in the schedule of the Wild Birds' Protection Act of 1872 be continued. 2. That all other wild birds be protected from 15th of March to 1st August, provided that owners or occupiers of lands, and persons deputed by them, have permission to destroy such birds on lands owned or occupied by them. 3. That one of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State should be empowered to except, in any particular district, any bird from the protection afforded, either by the Act of 1872 or by the proposed Act, if he think necessary to do so. 4. That for the sake of giving better protection to the swimmers and waders, no dead bird, if such bird is mentioned in the Sea Fowl Preservation Act, or the Wild Birds' Protection Act of 1872, be allowed, from 15th March to 1st August, to be bought or sold, or exposed for sale, whether taken in this country or said to be imported from any



other country. 5. That any violation of this proposed Act, or of the Wild Birds' Protection Act of 1872, be punished by the payment of costs alone for the first offence, and the payment of costs, and a fine not exceeding 5s., for every offence after the first.

THERE are more than sixty morning and evening newspapers published in Paris, and collectively they might challenge the united intelligence of the world to find in any of them a clear and definite programme for the immediate future of the country.

THE PARIS AQUARIUM.—The aquarium in the Champs Elysées, Paris, is to rival those of Brighton, Sydenham, Hamburg, Berlin, etc., and to be supplemented by a museum of fishing utensils and an antediluvian department, where extinct animals are to be represented artificially with the natural surroundings of the periods in which they lived.

Is a new work entitled "Telescope and Microscope," recently published in France, the following method of obtaining a lens for a cheap microscope is ascribed to an experiment of Sir Humphrey Davy. The process consists in igniting one end of a wheat or hay straw and allowing the entire spear to consume gradually. The cinder is then heated in the blue flame of a burner, and from the siliceous contained a solid globule of glass is formed, said to be well suited for microscopic purposes.

## EDITH LYLE'S SECRET.

By the Author of "Daisy Thornton," etc., etc.

### CHAPTER XXXVII.

I HAVE recorded how Edith received Gertie and how the sound of that voice and the touch of the warm lips to her own brought back to a certain degree the sunshine to her heart and made her almost happy again. There was something peculiarly restful about Gertie, something mesmeric in her presence, which everybody felt for good, and which affected Edith at once, making her forget for a moment her husband's words and manner.

"I am so glad to have you here, and this is your room," she said to Gertie as she led her into her pleasant chamber. "I wanted you near me and baby, he is so fond of you."

She was removing Gertie's hood and cloak and smoothing her rippling hair, and thinking how pretty she was in black, and wondering where she had seen an expression like that which flashed into the blue eyes and spread over the bright face at her caresses.

"You are so kind, and I'll try to be so good, and love you and baby so much," Gertie said, her lip quivering a little as she remembered the woman but for whose death she would not have been there in the atmosphere which suited her so well.

It was an hour before dinner, and Gertie spent the time with Edith and in playing with little Jamie, who at sight of her gave a coo of delight, and nearly jumped into her arms. He was a beautiful, active, playful child, and Gertie was sorry when the nurse came to take him, telling Mrs. Schuyler dinner was ready.

This was an ordeal Gertie dreaded. She had never since her remembrance sat at a gentleman's table, and though Mary Rogers had required from her the utmost decorum, and so far as she was able had taught her what was right, she knew there must be many little points of etiquette of which she was ignorant, and in a kind of nervous terror she cried:

"Oh, Mrs. Schuyler, I wish I did not have to go down. I am afraid I shall make some mistake before the young ladies. Can't I stay here by myself?"

"Certainly not," replied Edith, knowing the while that such a thing would be highly satisfactory to one of the young ladies at least, and possibly to her husband, but nevertheless being fully resolved that every privilege of the house, whether great or small, should be awarded to her protégée. "Certainly not. You are one of us now. You are my little girl!" and she passed her arm caressingly around the child. "Watch me if you like, and do what you see me do."

Yes, Gertie could do that, and, reassured by Edith's words and caresses, she entered the long dining-room with as much self-possession as if she had done the same thing every day of her life.

"Oh, Gertie, how do you do? And so you have come to live with us," Emma said, kindly, as she came in, and offering her hand she took her seat at the table, and did not once seem to look at Gertie, whose feelings she conjectured and wished to spare as much as possible.

With Julia it was different. She called herself a lady, versed in every point of politeness and breeding, and yet she could deliberately stoop to wound a girl who had never injured her and whose only crime was her poverty.

Arrayed in her longest train of dark blue silk, her hair the very latest style, as reported by Alice Creighton, and at least a dozen ends and streamers floating

from various parts of her person, she swept haughtily into the room, and with a slight inclination of her head to Edith and a slighter one to Gertie, took her seat, and while the soup, which she did not eat, was being served, occupied herself with a French novel, occasionally fixing her great black eyes upon Gertie, who knew just when they were upon her and flushed a little in consequence.

"What keeps father, I wonder?" she said, at last, to Emma, who did not know.

And Edith explained that he had business in town, and bade her not to wait dinner for him.

"I wish he'd come; dinner is so stupid without him," was Julia's comment as she betook herself again to her task, which she continued to read until the fish was brought on and she heard her father's voice in the hall.

Then it was put quickly aside, for reading at the table was something he had expressly forbidden as bad taste at least, while Edith too had pronounced against it.

For her, however, Julia did not care, and, as she knew her father was absent, she brought the book on purpose to show her independence.

But it was out of sight now, and she sat, stately and dignified, when her father came in and took his accustomed seat, after having greeted Gertie cordially and laid his hand caressingly on Edith's shoulder as he passed her.

He was very sorry for the ungraciousness of his manner when talking with his wife of Gertie, and the pained expression of her face had haunted him all the afternoon, and been the cause of his driving round by the cottage on his way home.

"I can at least do that," he thought, "and the roads are worse than I supposed."

But the cottage was empty, and no answer came to the loud knocking of his coachman upon the door. "She has gone," Mr. Schuyler said.

And then glancing at the upper window, around which the dead branches of the honeysuckle were framed, he thought of the face seen through the network of leaves years ago, and of the clear young voice which had spoken to him as he stood upon the walk.

He had thought of that face many times, and it came back to him as distinctly now with a remembrance of what Emily had said about "that kind of people," and he wondered if Emily would have classed his Edith with "that kind of people." Probably she would, for Emily had been a Rossetter, with no taint, however slight, in her patrician blood.

But somehow he felt very glad that he had Edith, even if her blood was mixed; and as he rode home he meant to be very kind to the orphan girl for her sake and conquer all his fears for Godfrey until he saw something tangible, when it would be time to act. So when he entered the dining-room and met Gertie's blue eyes raised so timidly to his he went to her at once, and, offering her his hand, bade her welcome to his house, and said:

"I drove to the cottage for you, but was too late. I fear you found the walking very bad?"

She had not minded it much, she said, while the beaming glance which Edith gave him from her speaking eyes told him that his peace was made with her, and he became exceedingly urbane, and even talkative, and, addressing some pleasant remarks to Gertie, made her feel more at her ease, if possible, than Edith's reassuring words had done.

She was very pretty, and graceful, and modest, and he watched her movements with an interest he could not define, and compared her with Alice Creighton and his own daughters, who, so far as beauty was concerned, fell far in the scale.

Emma was very kind to her, and paid her several little attentions during the evening, but Julia preserved the same haughty demeanour she had at first assumed, and never once spoke to her or noticed her in any way. When she had once conceived a prejudice it was very strong, and that night, after retiring to her room, she wrote to her Aunt Christine of this "last indignity put upon them by that woman," and wished so much that she was emancipated from school like Alice, and could leave the home which seemed like home no longer.

In reply to this letter Miss Rossetter wrote to her brother-in-law, saying she had heard of his kindness in giving Gertie Westbrooke a home until something could be done for her, and adding that she had in her mind a plan which would relieve him of the girl if he wished to be relieved, and benefit the child as well. She was wanting a little maid to be with her constantly, and Gertie would do so nicely after the training she should give her.

"I believe your wife has some Quixotic idea of educating her," she added, in conclusion, "and without giving my opinion in full with regard to elevating that class of people I will say that if the girl come to me I shall myself teach her an hour each day, which I consider all that is necessary, with what

she already knows. I hope you will send her as soon as possible, for Alice is to stay with me for some time, and between us we shall need an extra maid."

What effect this letter would have had upon Mr. Schuyler had he received it under ordinary circumstances I do not know. As it was it remained unopened for many days upon his table, while in an agony of anxiety he watched his baby boy, who lay almost constantly in Gertie's arms, its head pillowed on her bosom and its little feverish hand holding fast to hers as if fearful of losing her. It was scarlet fever in its most malignant form, taken where or how no one knew unless it came in the air from the town where there were a few cases, though none so bad as this.

At the very first alarm, Julia, who was afraid of disease in any form, fled to her own room, where like a true niece of her aunt she burned tar and kept chloride of lime as a disinfectant, and never went near the room where her baby brother was dying. Even the wet nurse shrank from the fever-smitten child, fearing for the safety of her own little nursing.

But Gertie knew no fear, and from the moment little Jamie opened his heavy eyes at the sound of her voice, and raised his hands to her with the shadow of a smile on his face, she stood by him day and night and held him at the very last upon her lap, hers the last voice which spoke words of endearment to him, and hers the last lips which touched his in life, for Edith was fainting in the adjoining room, and Mr. Schuyler in his anxiety for her did not know the end had come till he saw Gertie fold the child passionately to her breast, while amid a rain of tears she said:

"Poor Jamie, he is in Heaven now."

Then she laid him gently back in his crib and Mr. Schuyler knew his boy was dead.

They telegraphed for Godfrey, and the house was hung with mourning, and Julia stayed in her room and wondered if she would have to wear black, and did not much care if she did, remembering how becoming Rosamond Barton had said it was to her when her mother died, and Emma cried, and Edith sat motionless as a stone beside her dead baby, with a look of unutterable anguish on her face and no power to speak even had she wished it, for the iron hand was on her throat, and her heart was breaking for more than the dead child beside her.

Who had tended the death-bed of that other one? Who had folded the little hands upon the bosom as Jamie's were folded? Who had curled the rings of golden hair as Jamie's were curled? And who had kissed the pretty lips as she kissed these before her? Nobody—nobody.

Hospital nurses had no time for tears or caresses; strangers had buried her baby girl, and she, the mother, had made no sign, either then or since, and Heaven was punishing her for it, and her heart was broken in twain as she sat, white and still and speechless, while her husband tried in vain to comfort her.

Then it was that Gertie thought of everything. Gertie carried messages to and from Miss Julia, who unbent to her now that she could make her useful; Gertie comforted poor Emma and bathed her aching head; Gertie anticipated Mr. Schuyler's wishes before they were spoken, and Gertie took the fair white flowers from the conservatory, and, putting them on baby's pillow, laid her hand pityingly on the beautiful bowed head, which moved at the touch, and, lifting itself up, saw the flowers and the girl who had laid them there, and who was cutting a curl from the brown head on the pillow.

Then the iron hand relaxed a little and Edith gasped:

"Oh, Gertie, my child, my little one," while the first tears she had shed began to fall like rain and her body shook with sobs and moans, which did her good, for she was better after the outburst, though she would not leave the room until her husband took her away and put her in her bed, where she lay utterly helpless and prostrate while they buried her boy from her sight in the cemetery where Abelard was lying, and where the tall pine tree rocked and moaned in the winter wind and cast its shadow over both the graves.

Godfrey came to the funeral and saw his little brother first in his coffin, and was very decorous and grave and kind to both his sisters, and respectful to his father, and solicitous about Edith, and attentive to Gertie, whom he called the sunbeam in the house.

"I don't know what we should do without you now, and I am so glad you are here," he said to her, on the morning after the funeral, when he stood with her a moment by the window of the drawing-room, and thought how pretty she was in black, and how womanly she had grown within the last six months.

"How old are you, Gertie?" he asked; and when she told him fourteen last January he continued: "Almost a young lady. I shall have to make haste and get to be that perfect gentleman whom you are to reward with a kiss, or you will be refusing to pay—eh, Gertie?"

He spoke playfully and laid his hand lightly on her hair, while a beautiful blush spread over the face which was upturned to his, while a stern voice called:

"Godfrey, my son, I want you."

And Mr. Schuyler stood in the door, with a look in his eyes such as most any father might have if he found his only son making love, as he believed, to an unknown girl, without friends or money or position.

Mr. Schuyler had read Miss Rossiter's letter that morning, and, tearing it into a dozen pieces, had answered, saying that the girl who had been so much to his lost boy, and was so much to his dear wife, would henceforth be his especial care, and that if Miss Christine wanted a waiting-maid she must look elsewhere, as she could not have Gertie Westbrook.

This letter he had sent to the post; nor was he sorry for it even when he came so unexpectedly upon his son and fancied far more than he saw.

Gertie was too closely connected with his lost boy for him to cast her off. But he could not keep her there, and on the instant he formed the plan that Gertie should be educated at his expense, leaving her forty pounds a year to accumulate until she was of age.

But it must be away from Schuyler Hill, where Godfrey could not see her until matters between him and Alice were finally adjusted, and he had outgrown any boyish fancy he might entertain for this child just budding into girlhood, and growing each day so marvellously beautiful that even he began to watch her movements with interest and wonder at her loveliness.

He had meant at first to keep Godfrey for a few days, but he sent him back at once, and as soon as Edith could bear it told her of his plan with regard to Gertie, and told her in such a way that she did not venture to oppose him, though her heart ached with a new pain as she thought of losing the girl whom she loved more than she had ever done before, and who seemed so very, very near her.

Thus it happened that in the spring when Godfrey came home for a short vacation, bringing Macpherson with him, he was told that Gertie was being educated for a teacher.

"A teacher! Whew!" was his comment.

And his father, who overheard it, felt sure that he had done well in removing Gertie from his son's way.

Robert Macpherson was disappointed too not to find the young girl in whom he had been so much interested; but he kept his disappointment to himself, and hired his old room at the cottage, where he began to work again at his profession. But "La Soeur" was not there. At Edith's request it had been brought to Schuyler House, and was hanging upon the wall of her room, where she gazed at it so often, and never without a thought of her own lost little ones who slept, one she knew not where, and the other beneath the nodding pine where the soft winds of May sang a lullaby to her darling.

#### CHAPTER XXXVIII

SILENTLY fled the next four years, and we come again to the glorious day when summer was everywhere, from the perfume of the new-mown hay on the lawn to the golden flecks of sunshine on the river, the soft, warm haze encircling the mountain tops, and the musical hum of happy animal life heard on every side.

At Schuyler House every door and window was open to admit the pure, sweet air, not hot enough yet to be disagreeable, and the gay flower-beds out in the velvet turf had never seemed to me more beautiful than they did that morning, when I went slowly up the avenue, stopping occasionally to rest and look about me.

I had been an invalid ever since the day when I turned the key in my school-room door, and gave up to the pain cutting like so many knives through my poor, tired head, and so I had mingled but little with the outward world, and did not know much of what was passing in the quiet town.

With the affairs at Schuyler House, however, I was pretty well acquainted. Edith and I were great friends now. At first she had stood aloof from me, but when she heard of my illness she came at once, and, with kind words and many offers of attention, made my life far happier than it could have been without her. After the little grave was made under the evergreen and Gertie went away she came to me oftener, and during the many and long rides which

we took together in her pretty phaeton she told me much of her life at Schuyler House.

A very happy life for the most part it had been, though it had its dark side, as what life has not? Miss Rossiter had been a trouble while she stayed, and even after she was gone her baneful influence was felt in Julia's fitful moods and peculiar temper after the receipt of the letters in which allusions were always made to "that woman who had usurped your poor, dear mother's place."

But, notwithstanding "that woman's" presence, Miss Rossiter came every summer to Schuyler House, and stayed a month or six weeks, and filled the house with the odour of her drugs, and took upon herself such insufferable airs that Edith was glad when she was gone, and made the day of her departure a sort of jubilee.

Emancipated at last from the school-room, Julia and Emma were finished young ladies, and had been so for two whole years, during which time they had, together with Miss Creighton, seen all there was to be seen of fashionable life, both in London during the winter, and at the different watering-places they visited in the summer with Aunt Christine as their chaperones.

Julia was now nearly twenty-two, and very handsome, it was thought, though her beauty was of that dark, bold, dashing style which I did not admire. Emma, with her paleness and light brown hair, suited me better, for there was a sweet, gentle expression in her face which attracted a stranger at once, while in grace of manner and form she far excelled her haughty sister, who called her complexion "washed out," and her hair "tow," and patronized her generally. "The old maid" was the name she gave her, and after her return from her first winter in London she boasted to me of three different offers of marriage, while poor Emma had scarcely received any attention save as Mr. Macpherson gave it to her from sheer kindness of heart, because he did not like to see her so neglected.

Since their coming out neither of the young ladies had been much at home, and we missed a little the style and dash which they used to bring us, and had only Rosamond Barton and Mrs. Schuyler to admire and copy—except, indeed, on the rare occasions when Gertie was allowed to pass her vacations at Schuyler Hill. I say allowed, for it was that and nothing more. With each succeeding term she grew too dazzlingly beautiful for Mr. Schuyler's peace of mind, and he managed so adroitly that she never came to Schuyler House when Godfrey was there or expected, but passed her vacations elsewhere in happy ignorance of the real reason which led to her banishment.

So it was that we did not see her often in our quiet town; but when we had with us it was a season of rejoicing, and we made the most of it.

I was an invalid those days, and used to wait and listen for the rapid step and the clear, ringing voice which always set my heart throbbing and did me so much good. I did not wonder that everybody loved her, from old Mrs. Vandensenhisen in the Hollow to Tom Barton on the Ridge, and when the former brought me fresh eggs for my breakfast, and told me with a beaming face that "her young lady came home last night looking handsomer than ever," I knew she meant Gertie Westbrook; and when Tom Barton looked in and said, with a falter in his voice, "She went this morning," I knew that he meant Gertie too, and pitied him for the hope he was cherishing, which I was sure would never be fulfilled.

Since the memorable day when Mary Rogers spoke so boldly for the child whom she would not have compromised by so much as a breath of gossip Tom Barton had kept his promise, and guarded the little girl as carefully as if she had been his sister, until she had ceased to be a little girl, and he saw her in all the bright loveliness of sixteen, and then Tom went down before her charms, and asked her to quit school, and be his wife, and live with him at the Ridge, and snub Miss Julia Schuyler as she had been snubbed by her.

"No, Mr. Barton, I cannot be your wife. No girl would be that if she loved you ever so much," Gertie had answered, fearlessly, while Tom blushed painfully, and knew just what she meant, and swore he would reform and not look so much like a walking beer-barrel as he did now.

And he did try to reform, and took the pledge, and broke it in three weeks, and had the delirium tremens, and saw all manners of snakes twisting themselves around Gertie Westbrook, on whom he called piteously in his agony. Then he took the pledge again, and kept it too, and gradually the high colour left his face, and his figure began to assume a better shape, and his clothes were not so tight, and he came to see me so often that the meddlesome ones in town wondered if old Ettie Armstrong could be foolish enough to think that boy wanted anything of her!

"Why, she is forty at least," good Mrs. Smithers

said, averring that she knew because the day I was born their bees swarmed, and her husband broke his neck trying to saw off the limb where they had settled.

Of course such evidence was unanswerable, but as I knew just how old I was and why Tom Barton visited me so often I did not care to contradict the story of the bees, and I let Tom Barton come whenever he pleased to talk of his "best girl," as he called her, and to keep him from the "Golden Eagle," the low tavern where he had slipped so often.

(To be continued.)

#### FACETIÆ.

THE first postal card received in Aberdeen from an Aberdeen lady was marked private.

DOVE (N) E LUI!—The Liberals have had another defeat—bowed over at Dover. This time they lost the battle by chalks.—*Fun.*

A FRENCH writer describes a young lady as a creature that ceases to kiss gentlemen at twelve and begins again at twenty.

KIRSTY and Jenny, two country lasses, were discussing their new minister. "D'ye ken what he puts me in mind o'?" Just o' a kiss frae a body ye dinna like."

A HAPPY THOUGHT FOR TRAVELLERS.—Railway officials, possibly, may not be strict grammarians, but there is little doubt that most of them are now well versed in accident.—*Punch.*

"EVERY tree is subject to disease," said a speaker in a fruit growers' convention. "What ailment do you find on an oak?" asked the chairman. "A-corn," was the triumphant reply.

A RAILWAY guard, after twenty years of experience, concludes that he had rather attend to the wants of 20,000 men passengers than have one lone lorn female in his train.

A STRAY contraband from down South was lately inspecting a horse-power in operation, when he broke out thus: "Mister, I has seen heaps of things in my life, but I never saw anything whar a hoss could do his own work and ride himself too."

"UNHOOKED."—A young lady had coquetted until the victim was completely exhausted. He rose to go away. She whispered, as she accompanied him to the door, "I shall be at home next Sunday evening." "So shall I," he replied.

'ARRY AT SEA.

First Yachting Man: "I thought her a very nice girl; so much savor fair—"

Second Ditto (Royal Thames Y.C.): "Fair? Ah, then it must be a sister, 'cause the one I mean's a regular bronchitis."—*Punch.*

NO FOOLS.—It has been discovered, according to a scientific journal, that locusts will not eat tea-leaves. This proves that they are more intelligent than we have generally supposed. We wouldn't mind betting they won't drink tea either. Try 'em with a glass of bitter and mild, though.—*Fun.*

ASTRONOMICAL.—There can be no doubt that the Moon is inhabited, and by a race of people who make calls and leave cards and give dinner parties, and go out to dances and evening receptions, just as we do in this gay planet. Shakespeare settled the question long ago, when (in "Antony and Cleopatra") he referred to the "visiting moon."—*Punch.*

DROWNED IN HIS OWN MEDICINE CHEST.—The surgeon of a ship of war used to prescribe salt water for his patients in all disorders. Having sailed one evening on a party of pleasure, he happened by some mischance to be lost overboard. The captain, who had not heard of the disaster, asked one of the tars next day if he had heard anything of the doctor. "Yes," answered Jack, "he was drowned last night in his own medicine chest."

ALL ROUND.

Intelligent Youth to Artist: "I should think it be 'ard, sir, to do that 'ere!"

Artist: "Yes."

I. Y.: "Yer bean't got Willis's farm in the picture tho', sir."

Artist: "Oh! where's that?"

I. Y.: "There it be, sir, just behind yer."—*Fun.*

CALIFORNIA BITS.—A gentleman writing from California says you hear the word "bit" used very often. A "bit" is twelve and a half cents, or ten cents, or fifteen cents. If you buy an article that costs a "bit" you pay ten cents and it is all right. If you hand the storekeeper a twenty-five cent coin for an article worth a "bit," he hands you back ten cents change and that is "all right." You soon get used to it.

STARTING THE CART.—"Give me a bid, gentlemen—some one start the cart—do give us a bid, if you please—anything to start the cart," cried an excited auctioneer, who stood on the cart he was endeavouring to sell. "Anything you please to start it." "If that's all you wants I'll start her for you!" exclaimed a broad-backed countryman, applying his



shoulder to the wheel and giving the cart a sudden push forward which tumbled the auctioneer over the side. By the time the fallen auctioneer regained his feet the countryman had started too.

**A SHARP REBUKE.**—A little story is going the rounds concerning one of our London Broad Church clergymen, who, being recently on an excursion in Scotland, was vehemently rebuked by his landlady for taking a walk on Sunday afternoon. The clergyman said that he could not see the harm, and replied, "You know that Our Lord Himself walked with His disciples in the fields on the Sabbath Day." "Ay," said the old lady, "ay, I ken it, an' I ne'er thoct ony the better o' him for it, neither!"

POLITICAL ECONOMY.

**Madge:** "What are you looking so sorry about, Arthur?"

**Arthur:** "Multiplication!"

**Madge:** "Oh, I know all about multiplication!"

**Arthur:** "Do you? What's twice ten, then?"

**Madge:** "Oh, twenty-one, of course!"

**Arthur:** "No, it's not! It's only twenty!"

**Madge:** "Ah, but everything's riz, you know!"

—Punch.

SOMETHING TO BE GRATEFUL FOR.

**Sister:** "But you musn't complain, Willie dear; look how many things you enjoy."

**Willie** (in a sort of cut-and-dried way): "Plenty of grub and clothes."

**Sister:** "And nothing else to be thankful for?"

**Willie:** "Oh, I don't know. Yes" (in a half-whisper)—"I heard the bathing woman tell me this morning her rheumatiz was coming on again."

—Fun.

**ANECDOTE OF HORNE TOOKE.**—A good joke is told of Horne Tooke, whom the Tories in the House of Commons thought to crush by imposing upon him the humiliating task of begging the House's pardon on his knees. Tooke went on his knees, begged pardon for the offensive expression he had used, but, in rising up, he knocked the dust off his knees, and exclaimed, loud enough to be heard over the whole house: "It's a dirty house after all!" Roars of laughter followed this exclamation, and the Tories saw clearly enough that they had failed in their object.

**THE PROFESSOR'S HORSE.**—A professor at Oxford, having purchased a horse to go on a journey, wished to give his Eucalyptus a classical name, and applied to a friend to help him with an appellation. "Call him Graphy," said his friend. "Graphy!" exclaimed the professor. "Do you think I am going to write upon his back?" "Pshaw!" replied the collegian; the name is perfectly applicable. First, you purchase the horse, that is bi-o-graphy; second, you mount him, that's the top-o-graphy; lastly, you make your journey, and that's the ge-o-graphy.

**RACE WRITING.**—The reporter of an Irish paper, after being engaged three days in writing reports of races, attended church last Sunday evening, where the blow boy of the organ was unequal to the task. The result was the following report:—"At one moment the organ would be galloping to keep up with the choir, and the next minute the choir would get up a tremendous burst of speed to catch the organ. Finally, the two started off side by side as they went into the doxology, but as they reached the latter part of the second line, and were going finely and squarely, the wind of the organ gave out completely, and the choir had to finish the race alone, which they did in excellent time."

**A GOOD STORY.**—One day last week two young colliers, from Carlisle, drove down in a wagonette to a coal pit near Wishaw. They were dressed in the highest stage of finery. Each pocket in their waistcoats sported a watch in its own right, and the cable connections in gold between the button holes and watch pockets were something enormous. Their fingers had tires on extracted from the precious ore, while the heads of their walking canes glittered and glowed in the same metal. On driving up to the pit they asked a man, who happened to be near, if he would "haud the horse," and they would give him "something tae himsel'." The man consented, and the two colliers went down the pit, inspected their "rooms," came up again, and on the pithead held the following consultation:—"First collier—"Hoo muckle will we gie that coo for haudin' the horse?" Second collier—"Oh, dash't! we'll gie him a shilling. He's a hard-up-looking sowl." Accordingly the "hard-up-looking sowl" got his shilling. He touched his hat, thanked them, put the shilling in his pocket, and retired, with a queer smile struggling for a place on his features. He was the proprietor of the colliery. It is well that he behaved himself properly, or perhaps if the men had been leaders there would have been a strike. We are glad to see that masters know their places at last.

**THE POET AND HIS BOOTS.**—A little while ago a gentleman, with a very Irish name, who is a poet, was returning home late at night, carrying under his arm his dress boots wrapped in paper, when he was suddenly arrested by a policeman, who collared him in a very vigorous manner. The poet mildly remon-

strated, and asked the meaning of such very pressing attentions. The constable made a sneering reply, hinting that his captive knew very well why he was wanted, and another constable appeared on the scene to assist in conveying the luckless poet to durance vile. After some expostulation he succeeded it mitigating the suspicions of his stern janitors so far that they agreed to unhand him on condition that he walked between them, one in front and one behind, and made no effort to escape. Arrived at the police-station, the inspector at once exclaimed, "Why, this is not the gentleman; you have made a mistake," and tendered an apology to the poet. "That's all very well," was his reply, "but I should like to know something more about this rather singular affair. One does not get taken up every day of one's life." It was then explained that a lunatic had got loose from an asylum, and that his friends had told the police to look after him, and they would know him by reason of a peculiarity of his. He had a cat-like aversion to wet feet, and always carried a spare pair of boots under his arm in order to put on directly those which he wore began to get damp.

## CEASE REPINING, BROTHER.

WHY should man e'er repine—

Man, blessed with hope divine?

To him the skies will shine,

And cheer him on his way,

If he will do his best,

When with deep care oppressed,

To shield with faith his breast

And enter in the fray.

The bravest men e'er known

Of struggle on alone,

To reap the harvest sown

Of honour and success;

On ourselves we must rely,

If we'd win the victory,

Noble hearts appraise most high—

Victory and happiness.

Ne'er is seen a sadder sight

Than a man, in woful plight,

Cease 'gainst sin and shame to fight

Cease to strike for truth;

He should break the heavy chain

Binding him to wrong and pain.

Though he battle oft in vain,

Victory 'll come, forsooth.

Grand is he who marches on,

Doing deeds for honour done,

Winning crowns for goodness won—

Noblest soul is he!

Faint heart, in his work take pride;

Falterer, stand close by his side;

Stumbler, let him be your guide

On to victory.

Cease repining, brother! fight

For the glory of the right;

Courage take, and fill with might

Your doubting, fainting heart;

Man was made to bear

Hope's banner in the air,

To war against despair,

And act a noble part.

C. D.

## GEMS.

It is always in our power to make a friend by smiles; what a folly, then, to make an enemy by frowns.

CONSCIENCE is a sleeping giant; we may lull him into a longer or shorter slumber; but his starts are frightful, and terrible is the hour when he awakes.

Do good for thine own satisfaction, and care not what follows. Cause no gray hairs to any one; nevertheless, for the truth, even gray hairs are to be disregarded.

EVILS in the journey of life are like the hills which alarm travellers upon their road; they both appear great at a distance, but, when we approach them, we find that they are far less insurmountable than we had imagined.

An honest reputation is within the reach of all men; they obtain it by social virtues and by doing their duty. This kind of reputation, it is true, is neither brilliant nor startling, but it is often the most useful for happiness.

## HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

**HOW TO MAKE TOMATO SAUCE.**—"Everybody" can make tomato sauce—at least, so "everybody" thinks—but it is not everybody can eat it. The usual mode of procedure is to drown out the flavour

of the tomatoes with condiments, and then drown out the flavour of the condiments with water. The result is a thin, flavourless compound which is not worth using at all, but should be used with express speed, because within a few hours after the bottle is opened whatever is left becomes a mass of offensive mildew. To make good tomato sauce proceed as follows: Take ripe tomatoes, remove the stalks and calyx leaves, and boil them twenty minutes with only a few drops of water to give them a start. Rub through a tammy cloth to remove husks and seeds. To every quart of pulp add half an ounce of garlic and one ounce of shallots, or if these ingredients are not handy put in as a substitute six ounces of the strongest onions roughly minced, after the removal of the outer skins only. Boil twenty minutes and then strain it carefully, and while it is still hot flavour with salt, and to every quart add half a pint of common vinegar. Let it stand until quite cold and then bottle it. First put into every bottle a few red chillies, then fill to the neck and cork and seal, and lay the bottles down in a cool place. If they stand upright the sauce may become mildewed, but by laying them down the corks are swelled and the preparation kept air-tight.

## STATISTICS.

**THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR.**—According to an official statement which has been published the German field artillery fired 831,169 shots during the war of 1870-71; of this number 146,114 shots were fired by heavy field batteries, 123,804 by light field batteries, 59,934 by horse batteries, 7,736 by heavy reserve batteries, and 14,380 by light reserve batteries. To the total number of shots as given above must be added 4,469 shrapnel and 430 grape shots; so that altogether 357,237 shots were fired. The number of shots fired by the Prussian artillery in former campaigns was: In 1813-14, 73,881 shots; 1815, 18,086 shots; 1864, 41,247 shots; and in 1866, 36,188 shots. During the war of 1870-71, says the *Vaterland* of Munich, the Bavarian troops lost 19 per cent., while the loss sustained by the Prussian troops was only 14 per cent.

**SALES OF LAND IN IRELAND TO TENANTS.**—In the financial year 1872-73 there were 260 applications by tenants to the Irish Board of Public Works for loans to aid the applicants in the purchase of their holdings under the Landlord and Tenant Acts of 1870 and 1872; of these 183 were sanctioned by the Treasury, and in 137 of these cases the sums allocated, amounting to 78,000*l.*, were advanced in the course of that year. Advances of this nature have been made (to 31st March, 1873) to 225 tenants. The holdings purchased by them comprised, in all, 15,941 acres; the annual rents amounted to 12,304*l.*, the tenement valuation 8,800*l.* The amount of the purchase-money was 222,146*l.*, and the amount advanced by the Board was 134,549*l.* The holdings thus purchased by the tenants comprised 3,091 acres in the province of Leinster, 4,247 acres in Munster, 937 acres in Connaught, 7,666 acres in Ulster.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

WE learn from Bayonne that Don Carlos has issued postage stamps bearing his own portrait. They will be valuable mementoes.

SIR RICHARD WALLACE has made another gift of 25,000 *fr.* to the Public Assistance of Paris, for the purchase of winter clothing for the poor.

HER MAJESTY has commissioned Mr. Newton, R.A., to paint the view of Ben Nevis as seen from Inverloch Castle.

It may be a satisfaction to married men to know that under certain circumstances their wives may be compelled to contribute to their maintenance by a rule of Poor-law practice.

MR. DAVID HUTCHESON, of the long and far-famed fleet of Highland steamers, has received from Her Majesty a scarf pin set with brilliants, and a sum of money has been sent for distribution among the crew of the "Gondolier," the vessel in which Her Majesty sailed through the Caledonian Canal.

ST. STEPHEN'S CATHEDRAL.—The Viennese seem doomed to misfortune. It has just been discovered that the street frontage over the doors of the splendid cathedral of St. Stephen's is entirely crumbling away. The tower is already on permanent crutches, and decay seems now to be spreading over the whole church.

THE managers of the American Centennial Exhibition intend to appoint agents, who are to proceed to the several islands and colonies in the Pacific, and to the whole southern coast of Asia, from the Philippines to the head of the Persian Gulf, for the purpose of securing for the Exhibition of 1876 a complete display of the products, the wealth, the industry, and the resources of that part of the world.

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## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**GOLDEN HAIR.**—Announce in the usual manner, like all our other correspondents, and your communication shall receive every attention.

**A. B. C.**—Dum spiro spero (Latin) means "While I breathe I hope." Fidus Achates means the faithful Achates (compare our English word fidelity and the French fidele), and is applied to a constant and sincere companion. Such we regret to say are in our day exceedingly rare.

**ANNIE.**—To make lemon cheese-cakes grate the rind of 2 and the juice of 3 lemons, mix them with 3 sponge biscuits, 6 ozs. of fresh butter, 4 of powdered sugar; add a little powdered cinnamon and nutmeg, and mix the whole well together with 3 well-beaten eggs and a glass of cream. Sheet the patty pans with puff paste and fill them with the mixture, laying on the surface of each cheese cake thin shreds of candied peel.

**X. Y. Z.** (the second).—1. There are several streets in London bearing that name; one being near Portman Square. 2. There is no Journal bearing that name. It does not occur in the Directory—and we hope there is not; in reality the words "mutual friend" are grossly ungrammatical. We should say our common friend. A man cannot be a mutual friend to two persons in personal union as it were. The meaning of mutual is reciprocal.

**A. CONSTANT READER.**—1. We cannot say. Inquire of a music publisher. 2. Certainly your or any one else's writing may be improved. Imitate good models, persevere, and improvement will come speedily and surely. 3. L stands for libri, meaning pounds; s for solidi, the Latin equivalent for shillings; and the d for denarii, pence. These words, however, are used by a modern accommodation of the old Roman terms. In ancient Rome a denarius, for example, was valued at something like our sevenpence halfpenny.

**STUDENT.**—Babylon, a celebrated city on the banks of the Euphrates, the capital of the Assyrian empire. It was anciently the most magnificent city in the world, and became famous for the death of Alexander the Great and for the new empire which was afterwards there under the Seleucids. Its greatness was so reduced in succeeding ages that in the time of Pliny it was but a desolate wilderness; and at present the place where it stood is unknown to travellers. Its inhabitants, called Babylonians, were early acquainted with astrology.

**GEOGRAPHER.**—Patagonia, a large country in the most southern part of South America. The natives are tall, stout, and well made, their average height being above six feet; but their hands and feet are remarkably small. Their colour is a kind of bronze; and they have no other clothing than skins, which they wear with the hair inward. The Apibones, who inhabit the north-east part, are a singular race of warlike Indians, being mounted on horses, and armed with lances and arrows. This country is now dependent on Buenos Ayres, but the only considerable settlement is on the Rio Negro.

**DORA ALVAREZ.**—1. Hair naturally not inclined to curl will never do so. You might for any special occasion, however, use curling-irons. That seems to be the only possible plan. 2. Glycerine soap will be as good as any. You might also advantageously use the ordinary violet powder. 3. Government Telegraph Offices: Apply to the Secretary of the Telegraph Department, General Post Office, St. Martin's le Grand. 4. Handwriting good but capable of improvement. 5. We are not aware of the existence of any ladies' clubs, not at least in England. Such institutes exist, we believe, in the United States.

**J. S. S.**—The separation of lovers is indeed terrible; but it must come sometimes, and when it comes it must be borne bravely. Romeo in Shakespeare's exquisite play underwent feelings similar to your own, as when he says:—  
There is no Heaven without Verona's walls  
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.  
Hence banished is banished from the world,  
And world's exile is death.

**Or again:**  
Heaven is here where Juliet lives,  
And every cat and dog and little mouse, every unworthy thing,  
Live here in Heaven and may look on her,  
But Romeo may not.  
Live in hope of better times.

**JENNET.**—There is assuredly no royal road to learning. Diligent study is wholly indispensable. But there is no reason why you, a resident in London, should trust to your own unaided efforts and resources. There are many and cheap evening classes presided over by competent and distinguished men, where you might get the best possible instruction in the classic and the modern languages, in mathematics, history, moral philosophy, logic,

and in short all the best branches constituting a liberal education. Among such institutions are King's College evening classes; those at the Working Men's College, Great Ormond Street; Gower Street College; the Birkbeck Institution; South London Working Men's College, and others, spread more or less over the whole of London. We will conclude with the wise words of one of the most sagacious of the modern men—we mean Lord Bacon. Reading, says he in his essays, makes a full man, conference (the old English word for continuous colloquial discourse) a ready man, and writing an exact man. Writing, we may observe, is here rather obscure in its meaning. It may mean original composition of a literary sort, or it may mean only copying or imitation in regard to the works of others. In either case, however, the remark accurately applies.

**R. S. (Ryde).**—The general process of curing bacon without smoking is as follows:—It is recommended that the hair should be burnt off the hog after it has been killed by singeing it with kindled straw laid over it, and that the skin should not be scalded, nor wetted with water. A large wooden trough or tray being provided for the salting with a gutter round its edges to drain off the brine, the flitches are to be sprinkled over with salt, and then left for 24 hours in the trough, or on a sloping board, for the blood to drain away thoroughly. They are then to be taken out and wiped dry; the drainings are to be thrown away. Both sides of the flitches—not particularly the inside or fleshy side—are to be well rubbed with either common salt alone, or what some prefer, with a mixture in the proportion of six or 4 pounds of common salt, half a pound of saltpetre, and one pound of coarse sugar or treacle. The salt should be previously well dried in a frying pan over a fire. When the rubbing is finished, the flitches are placed in the trough upon each other, the skin side lowermost, and next day they should be salted again. They are then to be left in the trough for a month or six weeks, according to the size of the flitches and the state of the weather, rubbing them over with salt four or five times in that time. After that they are dried by hanging them up over the fire, but not in the smoke, and afterwards laying them upon a rack hung up to the ceiling in the kitchen, or in some very dry but not too warm a place, nor in the sun, as either of these will cause the bacon to turn rusty. There are some slight variations of this process, as practised in different parts of the kingdom, and it is in Yorkshire and Somerset chiefly that bacon is cured without smoking.

## "WHERE HAST THOU GLEANED TO-DAY?"

The sun sinks down in the purple west;  
The birds to their nests have flown;  
The flowers foretell the folding of night—  
Now where hast thou gleaned, my own?

Oh, tell me the field all full of grain?  
Didst bind up thy sheaves with care?  
Were sorrow and pain subdued and stilled,  
And kindness in measurement there?

Didst strengthen with hope the tempest tost?  
Didst point to the beautiful light?  
When raging the sea, and some poor soul  
Felt land was receding from sight?

Didst open thy hand to the shivering one,  
And give to the famishing food,  
And feel, in thine heart, for earth's worn ones  
To comfort I've done what I could?

G. W.

**X. Y. Z.**—Alfieri, the Italian dramatist, was born at Asti, in Piedmont, in 1749. He was placed in the College of Nobles, at Turin, but appears to have made little progress in learning there. Leaving college at sixteen, he led for some years a restless and dissipated life, travelling in Italy, France, England, Europe, and then through the countries of Northern Europe. A new epoch opened in his life in 1775, when he published his drama of Cleopatra, which was successful. Henceforth he was a laborious student and dramatic author, composed fourteen tragedies in seven years, and even at the age of 48 made himself master of Greek. At Florence he met the Countess of Albany, wife of Charles Edward, our young Pretender, whom, on her husband's death, he subsequently married. He was at Paris when the revolution broke out, but he was glad to get back to Florence, where he died in 1803. Such is an outline of his singular and chequered career.

**ELLEN E.**, tall, fair complexion, blue eyes, and a domestic servant. Respondent must be about twenty-four, and a working man.

**WALTER**, twenty-two, dark complexion, curly hair, loving, and fond of music. Respondent must be about nineteen, fair, loving, and domesticated.

**RALPH J.**, twenty-three, tall, dark, good looking and of an affectionate disposition. Respondent must be pretty, of a loving disposition, and domesticated.

**HAPPY JACK**, twenty-three, 5ft. 5in., a seaman in the Royal Navy, dark hair and eyes. Respondent must be about twenty, fair and loving.

**ERNEST**, twenty, fair, and fond of home. Respondent must be about eighteen, a blonde, and of an affectionate nature.

**FRANK**, twenty-one, tall, fair, blue eyes, and of a loving disposition. Respondent must be tall, dark, about the same age, and of a loving disposition.

**DORA E.**, eighteen, fair, good looking, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, and must have a little money.

**FRANK**, twenty-one, 5ft. 5in., dark, and considered good looking. Respondent must be dark, about nineteen, pretty, and domesticated.

**DICK A.**, twenty-three, 5ft. 6in., brown hair, blue eyes, loving, and fond of home, and a mechanic. Respondent must be about twenty, tall, and affectionate.

**JANET H.**, nineteen, fair, medium height, a loving disposition, and domesticated. Respondent must be about twenty-three, good looking, tall, and dark.

**JOSEPH**, twenty, tall, dark, and affectionate, desires to correspond with a young lady, pretty, and about his own age.

**TED B.**, twenty-five, dark complexion, brown hair, gray eyes, and a mechanic. Respondent must be rather tall, about twenty, loving, and domesticated.

**FANNY**, nineteen, medium height, fair, and considered pretty. Respondent must be about twenty-two, tall, fair, light hair, and fond of home and children.

**QUIET HARRY**, twenty-five, 5ft. 7in., dark-brown hair, loving, and fond of children. Respondent must be about twenty, loving, and possess an income of her own.

**DAVID M.**, twenty-four, dark complexion, and very loving, wishes to correspond with a young lady about twenty-two, of a loving disposition, and domesticated.

**DAISY**, nineteen, fair, of a loving disposition, and domesticated. Respondent must be steady, and fond of home.

**AMT**, twenty-seven, medium height, and a domestic servant, desires to correspond with a young man about her own age, and must be tall; a mechanic preferred.

**KIRRY**, twenty-three, medium height, brown hair and eyes, of a loving disposition, and domesticated, desires to correspond with a steady young man; a mechanic preferred.

**J. B.**, twenty-one, 5ft. 6in., a seaman in the Royal Navy, dark, and considered good looking. Respondent must be pretty, loving, and domesticated; a domestic servant preferred.

**MILLT**, twenty, tall, brown hair and eyes, fair complexion, fond of music and dancing, and has 150l. per annum. Respondent must be a tall, dark gentleman, of musical tastes.

**FOLLY**, eighteen, medium height, blue eyes, light hair, and considered pretty, would like to correspond with a gentleman about twenty, who must be tall, and handsome; a grocer preferred.

**LOUISE**, nineteen, tall, hazel eyes, brown hair, fair complexion, considered handsome, would like to correspond with a young man who must be tall, dark complexion, and about twenty-four; a clerk preferred.

**PHILIP**, twenty-five, tall, dark, and of an affectionate disposition. Respondent must be about twenty, fair, pretty, accomplished, and domesticated; a tradesman's daughter preferred.

**MARY E.**, twenty-one, dark hair and eyes, fresh colour, loving and domesticated, desires to correspond with a gentleman, about her own age, tall, fond of music and dancing.

**EDWARD**, twenty-two, fair, considered good looking, affectionate, and fond of home, desires to correspond with a young lady about nineteen, who must be pretty, and affectionate.

**FRED W.**, twenty-two, medium height, light blue eyes, fair, of an affectionate disposition and very fond of music. Respondent must be tall, pretty, of a lively temperament, and domesticated.

**LIVELY SARAH**, twenty-one, fair complexion, loving, fond of music, and domesticated. Respondent must be about the same age, dark, of a loving disposition, and fond of home.

**W. F. J.**, twenty, 5ft. 5in., dark complexion, curly hair, and of musical tastes, desires to correspond with a young lady about nineteen, pretty, loving, musical, and domesticated.

**CONSTANCE**, eighteen, medium height, fair complexion, and of an amiable disposition. Respondent must be tall, dark, loving, and fond of home; a tradesman preferred.

**LIFEBUOY**, twenty-one, 5ft. 6in., a seaman in the Royal Navy, dark hair and eyes, considered good looking, fond of home, and of a loving disposition. Respondent must be about twenty, medium height, loving, and domesticated.

**G. H. R.**, twenty-three, 5ft. 5in., a seaman in the Royal Navy, dark hair and eyes, considered good looking, fond of home, and of a loving disposition. Respondent must be about twenty-one, medium height, loving, and domesticated.

## COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

**HAROLD** is responded to by—"Nelly L." who thinks she would suit in every particular; she would be glad to hear from him.

**W. C.** by—"Emilia," who thinks he would fully suit her.

**F. J. H.** by—"Rose M." twenty-three, dark complexion, considered pretty, and domesticated.

**POLLY** by—"S. W." tall, dark hair, educated, and fond of home.

**LILIAN** by—"J. B. L." twenty-two, 5ft. 10in., dark, and thinks he is all that she requires.

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